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**The effectiveness of teacher librarians in primary schools: the experience of the Melani School Libraries in the Eastern Cape**

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**A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters in Information and Library Studies**

**Faculty of the Humanities**

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**COMPULSORY DECLARATION**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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## **Abstract**

In 2002, a pilot project established school libraries in eleven primary schools in Melani, Fort Beaufort District. The role players in this initiative were South African Partners (an American Non Governmental Organization), the Eastern Cape Department of Education, the University of Fort Hare and the Library and Information Science Association of South Africa (LIASA). Each school nominated one teacher to receive teacher librarianship training to manage and sustain the school libraries. The aim of the project was to develop a model that would lead to the establishment and development of school libraries in other areas of the Eastern Cape.

This research project sought to investigate the effectiveness of teacher librarians in primary schools reflecting on the experience of the Melani cluster of schools. The aim was to assess the effects the school libraries have had on teaching and learning. The qualitative and quantitative study involved 110 primary learners, 39 educators, 11 teacher librarians, and an official from the Provincial Department of Education.

The findings suggest that the school libraries contributed to academic achievement, emphasizing the necessity for every primary school to have a library. Consequently the study recommends the need to accelerate the completion of the National School Library Policy process in addition to further research on school libraries in disadvantaged communities.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

C2005	Curriculum 2005
DoE	Department of Education
ECED	Eastern Cape Department of Education
ERIS	Education Resource and Information Services
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
LIASA	Library and Information Association of South Africa
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
S.A. Partners	South African Partners
SLYSIG	School Library and Youth Services Interest Group
SRN	School Registry of Needs
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



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## **Chapter One**

### **1. Introduction**

A library is a collection of resources that are housed and kept available in a suitable place. There are many types of libraries and each one of them aims to meet the needs of its users. The school library is a specialized library that aims at providing educational support for the school community.

The challenge for any education system today is to prepare learners for lifelong learning that requires, among others an ability to use information in their personal lives, in the work place and become responsible citizens. To accomplish this many countries including South Africa have restructured their curricula to develop knowledgeable learners who can compete worldwide. School libraries with qualified teacher librarians are arguably a basic part of education as they offer the resources and skills to be a partner in fulfilling the objectives of education provision in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In Todd's (2001a) words "school libraries are about providing the best information opportunities for people to make the most of their lives as sense making, constructive independent people." There has been a lot of interest in the impact school libraries have on learning. Research conducted in developed countries has indicated that school libraries have a positive impact on learning. A study conducted by Williams and Wavell (2001) in Scotland described the following as some of the impacts of utilizing school library resource centres:

- Development of a studying and reading habit that encourages independent working.
- Motivation to learn and enjoyment of learning
- The acquisition of information and wider general knowledge
- Higher achievement in schoolwork.

Many other studies also underscore the importance of a school library in any school environment. It has proved to make a positive impact on school culture and academic achievement in both the developed and developing countries (Dresang & Kotrla, 2003:55; Lance, 2002). A good example can be drawn from the Ohio study conducted by Todd, Kuhlthau, and OELMA in 2004 (Scholastica, 2004). The study involved 13,000 children and the results showed that school libraries contribute to student academic achievement. On the other hand, the effectiveness of a school library may vary according to the extent to which it is resourced. This is a major challenge in many developing countries where the establishment of school libraries still faces many problems. These challenges can be found in South Africa but rather in a unique way. There is a combination of conditions that characterize a developed and underdeveloped country within the same nation. This unique situation is attributed to the apartheid regime that ended in 1994 with the first democratic elections.

### **1.1. Schools in South Africa**

The culture of teaching and learning in black schools suffered a dismal breakdown during the apartheid era. This has been attributed to the resistance of black learners and educators against the imposed 'Bantu Education'. Christie (1998) contends that the breakdown ended up causing:

1. Disputed and disrupted authority relations between teachers, students, and principals.
2. Sporadic and broken attendance by students and teachers
3. General demotivation and low morale of students
4. Poor school results
5. Conflict and violence in and around schools
6. School facilities in a general poor state.

In Carrim & Shalem's (1999:67) observations, apartheid education aimed at "eroding the possibility of developing a constructive climate within black schools so as to ensure learning and teaching occurred". After the 1994 democratic elections, efforts have been made and are continuing to correct these past disparities. The government together with other organizations are working hard towards the goal of creating an equal and integrated education system for South Africa.

The post-apartheid government as a means of developing South African citizens adopted the outcomes based education (OBE) approach. This system has been used in other countries such as Canada, Australia, and certain states in United States of America. OBE is learner-centric rather than the traditional teacher-centric approaches, emphasizing the different outcomes the learner will achieve after learning specific components in the curriculum (Botha, 2002:362). Mokhtar and Majid, (2005) describe learner centric education as an approach that moves from "direct instruction to active learning, knowledge discovery, and construction." This implies the use of a variety of resources, the mediation of a teacher and a facilitator of information use. These developments and changes in learning styles make the school library a fundamental part of the school as it offers the necessary resources that lead to the construction of knowledge (Kakomo, 1999:120).

## **1.2. Schools in the Eastern Cape**

During the apartheid era, the Eastern Cape Province (except for few selected areas regarded as South Africa) was mainly made up of two homelands namely the Transkei and the Ciskei. The creation of the homelands was aimed at encouraging 'separate development', but this became a recipe for "massive underdevelopment" (Eastern Cape Development Corporation, 2005). Downing (2004:4) explains that

"This system of 'separate development' was put in place to allow each of South Africa's major racial groups- the blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians to develop separately, apart from each other. Each group would be given their own geographical areas to live in, their own facilities to use and their own place in the economy...In practise; this meant that the whites would have the best areas, the best facilities and the best jobs. Apartheid had more to do with domination than separation." (Downing, 2004:4).

The education system was not spared and thus has changed to benefit all citizens after 1994. Lemon (2004) explains that the province's Department of Education faced serious challenges because it was to reform into a unit that would amalgamate all the other education units that were established to cater for educational needs across racial lines. Two extremes were and still are found within the same province, whereby the disadvantaged (blacks, coloureds and Indians) outnumber those who were favoured by the apartheid system.

Poverty in the Eastern Cape is still a serious factor. The province, with an estimated population of seven million people in 2004, is ranked second amongst other provinces in terms of high unemployment rates. The province is positioned first in terms of having the highest number of people living in poverty, (South African Institute of Race Relations {SAIRR}, 2004). The School Register of Needs (Department of Education {DoE}, 2000) indicates that the province has

2837 primary schools. However, most of the schools do not have the necessary facilities for effective teaching and learning. Such conditions are not conducive for the development or maintenance of school libraries.

### **1.3. Overview of school libraries in the Eastern Cape**

The best source of information on school libraries would have been the national school register of needs (SRN). Unfortunately, both registers from 1996 and 2000 provide inadequate details. The school register of needs (DoE, 2000) shows that the Eastern Cape has the second highest number of learners and educators in South Africa. According to the report on the South African Policy and Schooling Context compiled by the Department of Education (DoE), the SRN of 1996, revealed that:

“ ...Only 17% of schools have libraries...overall schools in the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape are the worst of in terms of infrastructure such as condition of buildings, libraries, laboratories, water supply, electricity supply, ablution facilities and telephones.”

The importance of school libraries in any education system needs no emphasis, but the above statement shows that most of the historically disadvantaged areas and communities are still suffering from inadequate availability of school libraries. During the apartheid era there was no solid foundation laid for libraries in the disadvantaged communities of the homelands. Matters were made worse by poor material provision to black schools and the poverty and unrest in the black communities. Many schools belonging to the black populace did not have facilities such as a library or resource centre to complement learning programmes.

“Studies conducted by the National Education Policy Investigation's Library and Information Research Group 1992, The Education Policy Unit (Stadler 1993) and the government commissioned School Register of Needs (Department of Education and Human Sciences Research Council, 1997) found that extremes characterized the school

library landscape during apartheid...libraries were not only predominant in schools for white, white learners were affirmed and advantaged to a superior extent over learners of other race groups. The majority being Black learners were subordinated and oppressed with negligible or no provision, and Coloured and Indian learners were less advantaged than white learners but more advantaged than their black peers" (Karlsson, 2003:2).

Many schools situated in the Eastern Cape Province do not have libraries. Nevertheless the Eastern Cape Education Department (ECED) has realized the need to remedy this problem. The Department has noted that the pace at which school libraries are being established is not satisfactory (Education Resource and Information Services: Policy Proposal for School Libraries, 2002:30). A study conducted by South African Partners (Non Governmental Organization) in 2003 revealed that approximately 93% of Eastern Cape primary schools lack libraries (SA Partners, 2003).

The ECED has a unit that is mandated to deal with information services, learner support materials, and libraries. The unit is called Education Resource and Information Services (ERIS). In 2002, ERIS developed a policy proposal for school libraries and library collections serving schools. The document acknowledges the fact that although the establishment of a national school library policy lies with the national Department of Education (DoE), the implementation remains the responsibility of the ECED and other provincial and local government departments (ERIS policy Proposal, 2002:28). At the time of this investigation, the document was still a proposal because no final national policy on school libraries had been approved. Even when a national policy comes into existence, there will still be disparities amongst provinces due to the variation in the challenges faced by different provinces. The Eastern Cape, for example, is a



poor province and therefore the provincial government may be forced to prioritize allocation of resources to more urgent needs such as health, provision of houses, water, electricity and building schools, rather than establishing school libraries.

The ERIS Policy Proposal (2002:30) for school libraries realizes that the province is found wanting when it comes to the development of school libraries. However, the ECED is working on remedying this problem. The proposal puts forth a number of solutions, one being the importance of partnerships. In this case, partnerships with NGOs and other interested institutions are seen as a means that could assist the ECED to establish school libraries and train teacher librarians to run these facilities. Therefore, records on schools with libraries and those without would be helpful. It could be expected that the ERIS Policy Proposal should provide comprehensive details concerning school libraries in the province; unfortunately, this is not so (ERIS Policy Proposal, 2002). Instead, it only mentions that the extent of development of school libraries in the province is unsatisfactory.

#### **1.4. The Melani cluster schools libraries pilot project**

The pilot project was established in 2002 at Melani as a basis for the establishment and promotion of school libraries and library collections in the Eastern Cape Province. The principal goals include the increase of access to books and other information sources to learners at foundation and intermediate phases; the support of targets established by the curriculum 2005; the access and use of school libraries and information resources in the improvement of

educational, social and economic status of learners. (Melani Cluster Schools Libraries Pilot Project, 2004).

The Melani Cluster School Libraries Pilot Project is one of the initiatives that aims to establish libraries in primary schools in South Africa. South African Partners (S.A. Partners), an NGO based in Boston, United States of America initiated this project. The other key team players are the Education Resources and Information Services (ERIS; Provincial Government Body and component of the Department of Education), the Department of Education (Fort Beaufort District Office), Department of Library and Information Science and the Distance Education Unit (both of the University of Fort Hare), the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) and the Melani community.

The Melani cluster schools library pilot project is based on a cluster of eleven primary level education schools. The schools fall under the Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape. The schools that form the Melani Cluster are situated along the banks of the Tyume River in the Tyume Valley at the foothills of the scenic Hogsback Mountain Pass. The cluster is in the proximity of the Binfield Park Dam in the Tyume Valley, which is a major tourist attraction besides being the source of irrigation for 1000 hectares of citrus orchard and water supply to 40,000 inhabitants of the area. At present the population targeted by this project has no access to public libraries or information resource centres. The nearest public library and post office are found in Alice more than 30 kilometres away.

The following is a list of the participating schools:

1. Festile Soga Primary School
2. Gwali Primary School
3. Isibane Primary School
4. Lower Gqumashe Primary School
5. McFarlan Primary School
6. Melani Junior Primary School
7. Nqwiliso Tyali Primary School
8. Ntulikazi Primary School
9. Tembani Primary School
10. Upper Gqumashe Primary School
11. Dyamala Primary School

The schools are about five kilometres from each other. The strategic goals of the project are listed as follows:

1. Provide training and support for teacher librarians in selected schools to establish book corners/libraries in their classrooms/schools and to incorporate these resources into the syllabuses
  2. Support the selection and acquisition of books and resources that facilitate programmes to promote reading and provide resources to teachers in the area of HIV/AIDS, Math, Sciences and Environmental Issues.
  3. Develop School Library Committees in each school of educators, parents and students to further encourage reading in the school and broader community; advocacy within the province for further resources. Follow guidelines established in the committees in the National Educational Frameworks.
  4. Evaluate the project and determine lessons for ongoing support and replication.
- (From: *Melani Cluster Schools Libraries Pilot Project, 2004*)

The foreseen specific impact includes the following:

1. Access to school libraries will enhance the performance of schools which hitherto have been still struggling to improve educational standards.
2. School libraries will also improve the general welfare of both the learners and surrounding communities.
3. Teachers in schools will be empowered by being equipped with knowledge and skills that will enable them to plan and manage effective school library systems.
4. School administrators, teachers and librarians will have additional financial resources to purchase books and other materials that would not otherwise be available to their school because of limited resources.
5. The purchase of locally published appropriate educational materials will help stimulate the book industry in the country.
6. The project will strengthen the advocacy for the strategic importance of school libraries.

7. To provide useful feedback in the replication or roll out of the project in the entire province or country.  
(From: *Melani Cluster Schools Libraries Pilot Project, 2004*)

Each of the schools nominated one teacher to attend teacher librarianship training workshops. Training was conducted from the Melani Junior Primary School due to its centralized locality. Training sessions took place twice per month on Mondays (2003-2004) from 09h00 to 14h00. The first school library was also established at this school and it serves as the central cluster library. It also functions as a model library for the development of other libraries in the cluster's schools. Training comprised theory and practical sessions. Four trainers participated in the training. Two came from ERIS and the others from the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Fort Hare. These trainers taught specific modules. (See Appendix 1 for the training action plan). The teachers have since completed training. The model library is up and running whilst the other libraries in the schools have been started as well. The teacher librarians still meet at the cluster's model library to process books and other materials before they are distributed to the schools.

The Melani Cluster Schools Library Pilot Project is not the sole project in the area aiming at developing school libraries. The Ikhwezi project is an initiative from benefactors from the United Kingdom. This project addresses a variety of school needs such as school libraries, school buildings and school gardens as opposed to the Melani Cluster Schools Library Pilot Project that exclusively focuses on libraries.

### **1.5. Research problem**

The establishment and development of school libraries in the Eastern Cape is not matched with the increasing need for school libraries as agents of effective teaching and learning. Besides funding there is urgent need to finalize the national policy for school libraries.

As the national policy awaits finalization, the ECED can harness the potential of NGOs, interested stakeholders and donors to develop school libraries. The Melani cluster schools libraries pilot project serves as an example of such an initiative.

This investigation was aimed at assessing the role of school libraries in a particular developing community. In this case the community was the eleven primary schools that constitute the Melani Cluster in the Fort Beaufort District, Eastern Cape. All these schools have libraries that were established because of the pilot project. The research was undertaken to investigate how the school libraries are being used in teaching and learning.

### **Objectives**

1. To establish how Melani schools library resources are utilized for teaching and learning.
2. To attempt to assess the impact of utilizing the Melani schools libraries on teaching and learning.

3. To identify obstacles encountered by the teacher librarians and the users of the Melani cluster school libraries.

### **Research questions**

The research questions arising from the above objectives are as follows:

1. Have learners been taught how to use the library resources? Do they have direct access to the library resources? For what reasons and when do they use these resources?
2. Have the educators observed any significant change in academic performance since learners started using library resources? Are the learners encouraged by the teacher librarians, educators, and the principals to use the library resources to develop a culture of reading?
3. Are the educators incorporating the library resources in their teaching programmes? Do the teacher librarians cooperate with their fellow educators to promote, mediate, and teach how to utilize the library resources?
4. Do the school libraries receive support from school management, the DoE, or any other organization?

## **Chapter Two**

### **2. School libraries and teacher librarians: their role in education**

This section attempts to discuss what other researchers have found and written about the importance of school libraries and teacher librarians in schools. The investigator would like to point out that, that which is included in this section is not exhaustive of the literature written on the topic; rather it covers available select sources that deal with themes that underpin the study that were available to the researcher.

#### **2.1. School libraries: brief global perspective**

Studies in developed countries show that well resourced libraries contribute to academic excellence in schools (Lance, 2000; Moore and Trebilcock, 2003:111). Haycock (2004) explains that the school library can play effective roles in enhancing student achievement. This conclusion was reached after a team of researchers conducted research in a number of Ohio School Libraries. 13000 school children participated in the study. Their findings revealed that a school library fulfils various roles in the school community such as:

“(a) Resource agent (b) Literacy developing agent (c) Knowledge construction agent (d) Academic achievement agent (e) Independent reading and personal development agent (f) Technology literacy agent (g) Rescue agent and an (h) Individualized learning agent.” (Haycock, 2004)

A study conducted in four states (Alaska, Pennsylvania, Colorado and Oregon) in the United States of America by researchers affiliated to the Colorado State Library and University of Denver found that “the level of development of the library media program was a predictor of student performance...where library media programs are better staffed, better stocked and better funded, academic

achievement tends to be higher” (Lance, 2001). In a report on the role of libraries in education, Boucher and Lance (1992:7) note that libraries (school libraries included) play the following roles:

1. Libraries of all types impact the achievement of students.
2. Libraries of all types prepare individuals for and assist them with lifelong learning.
3. Libraries of all types prepare individuals for productive employment in a high performance information based economy.
4. Public libraries and school library media centres promote the enjoyment of reading, viewing and listening for people of all ages and stages of development.
5. Public libraries and school library media centres prepare individuals for responsible citizenship.

In addition to these roles, their report underscores the fact that libraries (school libraries included) ensure equity in education because:

1. Libraries of all types provide intellectual and physical access to information and ideas for a diverse population with rapidly changing needs.
2. Libraries of all types ensure free and equal access to information and ideas unimpeded by social, cultural or economic constraints.
3. Libraries of all types ensure free and equal access to information and ideas unimpeded by geographical constraints.
4. Public libraries and school library media centres help students stay free of drugs and violence and offer a disciplined environment conducive for learning. (Boucher & Lance, 1992:6).

The realization of the importance of school libraries is not limited to the developed world but the developing world as well. Countries such as Ghana, Tanzania, Mali, Mozambique, and Kenya have acknowledged this fact too (Rosenberg, 1998). Magara and Nyumba (2004), researchers from Uganda, assert that:

“A right to education implies a right to access information. Libraries and other related information services are crucial in educational development because the information they hold is an essential tool with which to foster the learning process...a sound education is facilitated by a good library”.

They quote a study done in Uganda with the purpose of demonstrating that the academic performance of students at schools with libraries is better than those



without. In this comparative study, the examination results of form four students over a period of four years from two schools were examined. One school had a library and the other did not. Students from the school with a library performed better than their counterparts who lacked such a facility. In view of these findings and other deliberations, they suggest that a school library should fulfil the following roles:

- To support learning programmes
- To support teaching programmes and research
- To act as information centres
- To provide recreational and professional development (Magara & Nyumba, 2004).

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are also strong advocates for school libraries. They have developed a Manifesto that can be followed by school libraries in different countries. The Manifesto states that:

“The school library provides information and ideas that are fundamental to functioning successfully in today's information and knowledge-based society. The school library equips students with life-long learning skills and develops the imagination, enabling them to live as responsible citizens” (IFLA-UNESCO, 2000).

The above statements draw attention to the critical role school libraries have to play in the education of the citizens of any country. Sadly, though many governments acknowledge this fact the development of school libraries and the implementation of library programmes where libraries exist have not always been satisfactory, especially in developing countries (Hell, 2005:6-7). Machet (2001:15) argues:

"Reading is one of the most essential skills that a child has to master. It is the basic skill needed to master every other school subject including mathematics. Children who are not good readers will be permanently disadvantaged, not only in school, but in living in the information society of today because of the high level of literacy required in virtually every area of one's life ...there are government officials in the education department who believe that story books and libraries are a luxury that can be easily dispensed with and do not take cognizance of the fact that effective learning cannot take place without effective reading."

Likewise Clyde (2005) insists "Reading is a key skill in education; it is also the foundation for information literacy...school libraries are an important source of those reading materials." Mabomba (1990:15) provides a similar argument:

...Primary school graduates or dropouts who have acquired reading skills and habits are likely to remain literate in their later lives, given the proper literate environment...the presence of proper and easily accessible school library services will help develop immunity in children against illiterate influences."

Kakomo (1999:120) conveys that the "acknowledgement of school libraries in different countries is a result of deliberate efforts". Therefore continuous lobbying is necessary to highlight the important role of school libraries, guarantee the development of school libraries where they do not exist and the management of library programmes to ensure use. Todd (2001b) advises that lobbying should go beyond advocacy and focus on showing the link between school libraries and knowledge construction. In accordance with his research school library advocacy is not a new thing with administrative bodies. The challenge is to present these institutions with reports of "evidence-based practise" that will convince them to make school library programmes a priority. He therefore argues that:

The hallmark of the school library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not its collections, its systems, its technology, it's staffing, its building BUT its actions and evidences that show it makes a real difference to student learning, that it contributes in tangible and significant ways to the development of human understanding, meaning making and constructive knowledge. (Todd, 2001b)

### **2.1.1. Teacher librarians**

Teacher librarians play a significant part in the different roles that are performed by school libraries. There may be assumptions that where there is a well-stocked library there is also a coordinated library programme. Moore & Trebilcock (2003:111) found this not to be true in their study that looked into how school library teams can influence teaching and learning. Likewise Olen (1997) argues that “the existence of a school library does not guarantee use.” Lance (2001) reports common findings realized after researchers affiliated with the Library Research Service of the Colorado State Library and the University of Denver completed studies on the impact of school library media programs on the academic achievement of United States of America public schools. A few are listed below:

- a) Professionally-trained and credentialed school library media specialists (teacher librarian) do make a difference that affects student performance on achievement tests.
- b) In order for media specialists to make this difference, the support of principals and teachers is essential.
- c) Library media specialists have a two-fold teaching role. They are teachers of students, facilitating the development of information literacy skills necessary for success in all content areas, and they are in service trainers of teachers... (Lance, 2001).

Running a successful school library is not an easy task. It requires resources and collaborative teamwork. Needham (2003) who is a teacher librarian gives an account of how it took ten years to develop a flexible school library programme. This may sound discouraging, but in the end collaborative efforts between the teachers, teacher-librarians, administrators, and the students were successful.

Farmer (2002) contends that “the information age requires information literate citizens: students need to know how to locate, evaluate, and manipulate information. How do students acquire these skills?” The answer could be that students need to be taught, but how? Farmer (2002) explains that teacher-librarians need to work with other teachers as well as the learners to identify information literacy gaps. Examples provided in this case were about teacher librarians talking to other teachers about student performance, plagiarism, and so forth. Students were asked about the progress with their research projects. This exercise pinpointed problems that were thereafter tackled. Similarly, Mokhtar and Majid (2005) contend that:

“Students now need to be trained and groomed on how to think and think creatively and critically. Tried, tested, and workable ways of doing this are not attractive or desired anymore. Teachers need to use a variety of information sources in their lessons so as to keep their students interested and their lessons current and informative.”

Needham, (2003) suggests that integration, collaboration, and flexible scheduling led to the success of her school’s library program. She explains that:

“Integration refers to connecting disciplines, teaching information literacy skills at the point of need in conjunction with other curriculum...Collaboration between teachers and the teacher –librarian is the key to integration ...Flexibility in the library schedule means student needs dictate the schedule...Flexible access creates an atmosphere that says ‘Your quest for knowledge is important to us.’”

Integration can be achieved when the teacher librarian and teachers link topics from the current curriculum and the use of resources from the library. Flexible scheduling such as an hour after school hours or recess can encourage leisure reading.

School management also plays an important role in the development and maintenance of libraries. As outlined, teamwork is necessary. In this case the school principal and the school governing body should recognize the importance of the school library. Stander (1992:165) blames failure of library programmes to "lack of recognition by authorities of the value of an information centre, inadequate funds ... and inadequate existing buildings and facilities." Hart (2003:5) claims that the success of school library programmes relies on the following:

"...Collaboration and co-operation-partnerships. There is consensus that principals and teachers need to buy in to the school library programme if it is to achieve its learning outcomes...the support of the school principal has been shown to be crucial by recent international research."

Lack of such collaboration could therefore hinder the success of the school library programme. On the other hand, Loetscher as cited by Le Roux (1992:47) advises teacher librarians to be optimistic and underscore the importance of school libraries. In his opinion

"Media teachers (teacher librarians) need to scrutinize their roles because they have considered themselves as 'enrichment' for the basics rather than as the fodder on which learning can thrive...enrichment, like butter on bread, can be scraped off or be dispensed with when times become harsh."

Teacher librarians as key role players should have professional teacher training and knowledge of the curriculum (Stander 1992:169). Additional training in school librarianship is also essential. In this author's opinion the failure of library programmes have been caused by:

- Lack of dedicated staff willing to act as distributors and facilitators of information.
- Lack of staff familiar with the language and culture of users and with local conditions.
- Lack of staff with good human relations and knowledge of the child's mental development (Stander, 1992:169).

Teacher librarianship training should therefore not focus on curricula issues only but also cultural, recreational, and personal aspects of the educators and learners.

Hart (2002:6) describes the demise of teacher librarianship education in institutions of higher learning and teacher colleges. She contends that, "...without secure teacher librarian posts there is no incentive for teachers to sign up for these courses." In her opinion once teachers and policy makers perceive school libraries as centres for learning and not just collections teacher librarianship training, employment, the development, and sustainability of school libraries will change for the better. A study conducted by People for education (2006:13) in 800 Ontario publicly funded schools proved that:

"...There is substantial evidence linking the presence of trained library staff to improved student achievement in Ontario schools. The enjoyment of reading is linked to the presence of teacher librarians, and ...studies have documented an association between reading enjoyment and student achievement. While this is the first Canadian study to demonstrate this correlation, these results echo findings in many other international investigations."

Strangely, the study confirmed that the number of teacher librarians in Ontario schools is lesser than the last decade; budget cuts are blamed for this (People for education, 2006:10). Radebe (1998:59) reports a similar situation in South Africa where teacher librarians progressively withdrew themselves from library duties due to lack of funds and increased teaching portfolios. The researchers of the Ontario study similar to Hart (2002:6) are recommending that all students or learners should have access to "well stocked and professionally staffed libraries (People for education, 2006:13).

Kakomo (1999:121) portrays the library-staffing situation in schools in Lesotho as peripheral to teaching posts. In most cases staff are selected from the English Department at the schools and receive training from the Lesotho National Library Services. However these teachers have full teaching loads and in his words “...managing the school library is an extra duty...where staff simply check out and check in books. This is a far cry from the school library’s desired curricula.” Hart (2002:8) like Kakomo (1999:124) emphasizes the need for education authorities to acknowledge the importance of teacher librarians in addition to school libraries. The argument here is that teacher librarians can only function effectively and efficiently in a friendly environment created by policy and curriculum developers along with their fellow educators (Hart 2002:3).

## **2.2. Education in South Africa.**

Education plays an important role in the development of any country. It is for this reason that South Africa is restructuring the education system with a view to making education to assume a central role in national development. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) which has now developed into the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) is a result of such efforts. Chisholm (2005:193) explains that:

“In 1997, the new national Department of Education (DoE) launched Curriculum 2005 (C2005) informed by the principles of outcomes based education (OBE), as the foundation for post- apartheid schools’ curriculum. Three years later, in 2000, Curriculum 2005 (up to grade 9) was reviewed and revised. Following consultations with unions, public hearings in 2001, presentations with the main organs of government and further refinement in the light of these public processes, the Revised National Curriculum Statement as the ‘streamlined’ C2005 was named, became official policy in 2002.”

The intention of this curriculum is to empower children to grow and become knowledgeable citizens who can compete in the global arena. According to the Director General of the Department of Education (DoE):

“...The National Curriculum Statement is not a new curriculum, but a streamlined and strengthened Curriculum 2005, which was introduced in our schools in 1998. It is hoped that this curriculum will help us develop citizens that are multi-skilled, knowledgeable, and sensitive to environmental issues and are able to respond to the many challenges that confront South Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (DoE: RNCS Parents Guide, 2005:2)

The key principles of the new curriculum according Naidoo (1997:4) are:

- Education and training will be integrated.
- All learners will succeed. Time will no longer control the learning process. This means that all learners will develop at their own pace.
- Learners will need to show what they have learned in different ways.
- Assessment will be an integral role of the whole system.
- Learners will know what they are learning and why.

Botha (2002:362) explains that:

“OBE promised to improve the quality of education in South Africa and... without a shadow of a doubt, constitutes a radical break with the previous education approaches of the Apartheid South Africa of earlier.”

Clearly, the welfare of the learner takes centre stage in the South African curriculum, unlike the education system during Apartheid that was content based. In that case completing the syllabus on time was a priority rather than the learners' progress (Zinn, 1997:46).

The DoE's RNCS Parents Guide (2005) is a document that tries to convince parents that primary education in South Africa is being changed into better quality. However this will remain a challenge in the absence of well-resourced libraries in primary schools, because the document clearly stipulates the implementation of resource based learning. The school library should be the repository of these resources. Radebe (1998:55) states that “one of the changes



envisaged as a benefit of OBE in the classroom is that learners will know how to collect, gather and organize information and conduct research.”

Despite the good intentions of the revised curriculum academic achievement at matriculation in the Eastern Cape has been dismal. The matriculation pass rate in 2003 was overall at 60%, consequently the province ranked eighth amongst the nine provinces (SAIRR, 2004).

Another difficulty faced by rural primary schools is the lack of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) such as computers. This is a challenge faced by the DoE, in not only the Eastern Cape but also the whole country. It is a problem that cannot be solved overnight, as South Africa is a vast country. Time, fiscal, and technical means are required to overcome this problem.

### **2.3. School libraries in South Africa**

According to the South African Yearbook (2004/05:215) there were 9416 school libraries in South Africa by mid 2003. Unfortunately, details regarding types of schools and their location within the country were not provided. Furthermore, the yearbook for 2005/06 does not mention the number of school libraries or any other libraries for that matter.

Karlsson (2003:3) and Radebe (1998:56) describe the dismal effects apartheid had on school libraries particularly for the black population. According to Radebe (1998:56):

A negligible number of libraries were available to black people from before and after Apartheid...this deprivation of black people of library services was part of a grand scheme of controlling access to information, for black people to avoid the 'poisoning' of their minds against the government."

Karlsson, Nassimbeni, and Karelse (1996:12) report that school libraries during the apartheid era were marginalized particularly in African schools for the following reasons:

...People in positions of authority lacking an understanding of the relevance of learning resources in libraries...huge disparities in budget allocations between the different (education)departments, giving rise to widespread absence of facilities, inadequate provision of materials, inadequate physical accommodation and trained personnel, all evident in African schools; a lack of understanding of the role of information resources in teaching and learning, resulting in the marginalization of school libraries in the education sphere and poor coordination between school libraries and other sectors.

According to Radebe (1998:57) in 1997, there were 4638 school libraries in South Africa. When compared to the 9416 school libraries (number provided by the South African Yearbook 2004/05), the assumption is that 4778 school libraries were developed over a period of seven years. This is improbable as the difference in numbers may be attributed to differing definitions of what comprises a school library. The availability of information concerning the location of these school libraries would provide a picture on where these libraries are developing. The investigator could not access this information at the time of this study.

The new DoE set out to dismantle Apartheid education and put in place a curriculum that would benefit all citizens. Hence, C2005 was introduced to uproot the discrepancies of apartheid. Hart (2002:5) explains how C2005 promised a "favourable climate for school libraries." The outcomes based approach would rely on the use of a variety of resources to assist learners in their construction of

knowledge. For this reason, the school library would provide all the required resources for teaching and learning. Similarly, Radebe (1998:55) contends that:

“One principle which informs the OBE curriculum, and which impacts on the school library and the provision of learning resources is that of learner-centeredness...the role of the school library in this area is therefore to provide learning resources for different phases and levels to meet the pace and needs of each learner. This further implies that educators have to be familiar with such learning resources and how they can be used in a learning environment.”

Unfortunately, Hart (2002:5) argues that despite the emphasis of resource-based learning in the curriculum school libraries are not referred to in C2005, even though information literacy skills are noted as important in the document.

Schools exist for learners, for that matter learners should be the priority of the school. So what do the school, the DoE and even the nation expect of our learners? The answer should be, probably to create a society of knowledgeable people who can function in a competitive knowledge based economy. Eisenberg, Spitzer and Lowe (1998:132) argue that “educational restructuring makes information literacy skills a necessity as students seek to construct their own knowledge and create their own understandings”. Similarly Clyde (2005) reports that “an important development of recent years is an understanding of information literacy as a foundation of curriculum...like thinking skills information literacy underpins all curricula within school systems.” Information literacy has been defined as:

- “The ability to find and use information” (Kastanis, 2004:8)
- “Broadly defined as a set of abilities that allow a person to recognize when information is needed and to effectively and efficiently act on that need.” (Rockman, 2004:2)

- "The ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use information." (George & Kerr, 2003:207).
- "The ability to use information for independent enquiry and learning." (ERIS, Policy Proposal for School Libraries 2002:32)
- "Information literacy is more about thinking, choosing, comparing and presenting information than about handling and consulting resources". (Hart (1999:25))

The core aim of the RNCS is to develop multi-skilled and knowledgeable citizens. This cannot be achieved if learners are not information literate. The RNCS puts special emphasis on resource-based learning and teaching, where learners will be given the opportunity to learn from a variety of resources (books, magazines, posters, tours, ICTs and so forth) and not just from listening to a teacher in a classroom. Moreover, learners are to be encouraged to complete projects, assignments using a variety of resources as well. Even so, Eisenberg, Spitzer and Lowe (1998:132) contend that there is a danger of confusing resource-based learning with resource-based teaching.

The DoE's RNCS Parents Guide (2005:7) reassures parents that all teachers have been properly trained. Nevertheless, teachers should understand that the learner is the focal point, and therefore not mislead learners by limiting the use of the resources themselves. Instead, Eisenberg, Spitzer and Lowe (1998:132) advise that the teacher should take on the roles of "facilitator, instructional designer and collaborative researchers". This will enable students to develop inquisitive minds that will prove to be practical in life. One could argue that this is easier said than done. Certain educators are used to a traditional style of teaching whereby the teacher is seen as the fountain of knowledge; Hart (2003:9) explains that:

"Teachers who see themselves and their classrooms as self contained units do not need a library...this kind of teaching probably is the norm in our traditional education systems throughout Africa and the rest of the world- where "chalk and talk" prevails still."

Olen (1996:81) argues that, "...to effect educational change a transformation in teacher's attitudes, learning, and assessment may be necessary." Even though educators have undergone training it may take more than time to change their teaching styles. Other factors have to be taken into consideration such as teaching cultures developed over a period of time by educators. Hart (1999) asserts that:

"...There is a need for research into the attitudes and beliefs that underlie teachers' behaviours...how teacher personality factors, subject matter specialization, educational philosophy and instructional practices employed might affect the relationship of the library media centre to the instructional programme.

Information derived from such studies could help develop programmes that will help educators realize the significance of school libraries in an education system.

Teacher librarians should emphasize the importance of developing information literate learners in their schools. On the other hand, teacher librarians may be reluctant to do so if they are not information literate themselves. Asselin (2004) describes a situation in Canada where information literacy is determined to be the central focus of education reform but it is not really happening because teachers are not prepared to teach this aspect. She also mentions that teachers' lack of understanding hinders joint efforts between teachers and teacher librarians. Henderson & Scheiffler (2003) explain that it is important that teacher education incorporates information literacy. The ERIS policy proposal for school libraries (2002:3) states that "the teacher-librarian is a key role player at the

school in the establishment of a culture of information literacy across the curriculum and at all grade levels in the school.”

### **2.3.1. School library policy in South Africa**

The establishment and sustainability of school libraries relies on the joint effort of government, schools, and communities. The government through the DoE recognizes the necessity of school libraries. According to the DoE (South African 2004/5 yearbook) the school library is described as:

“... A facility ideally suited to providing learners with a wide range of curriculum-oriented resources in diverse media forms as required by OBE... Teachers and learners will only be able to access OBE if they have access to learning resources. This has implications for the way school libraries conceptualize, manage and provide resources.”

Affirming that school libraries are important, one would think that there is a policy in place to institute and maintain libraries in the country. By July 2004 the DoE was still working on the draft Policy Framework for School Libraries (South African Yearbook 2004/5). Hart (2003:14) observes that:

“... International experience shows that the development of school libraries within a society depends on legislative and policy frameworks. Our own policy-making framework began in 1995-with a first draft school library policy framework complete in 1997. It has been stalled ever since...”

The draft South African National School Library Policy acknowledges lack of school libraries in the majority of public schools. Le Roux (1992:43) attributes the uneven development of school media centres (libraries) to the different Education Departments that were established to meet the educational needs of the different race groups. Those privileged to have had school libraries during the Apartheid era were White, Coloured, or Indian; unfortunately the policy notes that most of these libraries have deteriorated. This is attributed to “the backlog in as far as the provisioning of school libraries is concerned...and that Provincial Departments of

Education do not have the finances and personnel at their disposal to close the gap” (DoE, 1997:15).

Hart (2003:14) contends that NGOs, volunteers, and donors from overseas have established some school library projects but “they cannot replace the school library services that C2005 demands.” Kakomo (1999:124) makes a similar point by stating that “for the school library to develop and become an integral part of the school and its curriculum, legislative support is a must...” Kakomo (1999:124) cites the case of Scandinavian countries where the success of school libraries is attributed to legislative support. For the prevailing situation in South Africa, Karlsson (2003:7) blames the “incomplete policy process” on:

“Lack of national government commitment...the two Departmental groups assigned with this task worked separately rather than collaboratively... meaningful connection between the requirements of the curriculum and the potential of school libraries to serve those needs was not sufficiently established in the consciousness of curriculum developers...”

LIASA, through the School Library & Youth Services Interest Group (SLYSIG) have been lobbying for the completion of the national school library policy. Their newsletter (2005/6:1-2) reported that the policy was discussed in the Curriculum Management Committee (The committee is a sector of the DoE) meetings held on the 16<sup>th</sup> August and the 3rd of October 2005. The policy proposes the following:

1. A National School Library Policy that is implemented at schools in all provinces.
2. The National School Library Policy advocates for a centralized library in each school.
3. The allocation of at least 10% of the learning and teaching support materials budget to purchase library resources, including a computerized administrative system for the library.

4. Appointment of officials within its organizational structure (DoE) i.e. National, Provincial and School, at an appropriate level to plan, formulate, develop, coordinate, support, monitor, evaluate and ensure the implementation of the National School Library Policy.

The newsletter reports that the " ...the DoE has allocated R 1.2 million for the year 2006/7 for mediation of the policy, i.e. National launch event and a robust advocacy campaign to ensure that all South Africans understand the intentions."

The above statement is confusing because the South African 2005/6 yearbook indicates that the policy process is still incomplete.



## **Chapter Three**

### **3. Research design and methodology**

Teacher librarians in primary schools are the essence of this study. To describe the experience of the Melani Cluster of schools the investigator needed information pertaining to the effectiveness of the teacher librarians in the eleven schools, use and perceptions of the school library by learners along with the use and perceptions of the school library by educators. This chapter provides details regarding the research design and methods utilized by the investigator.

#### **3.1. Research methodology**

This study focused on understanding the use of the Melani school libraries and the role of teacher librarians in their use. Mwanje (2001:71) states that it is necessary to build a “complex, holistic picture of the subject of interest”. To achieve this, mixed methods combining the quantitative and qualitative approach (questionnaires, interviews, observation and a focus group discussion) were used. This choice was dictated by the nature of this study that required gathering different types of information to answer the outlined research questions.

Other researchers have set a precedent in utilizing multiple methods that include quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the importance of school libraries. Maepa & Mhinga, (2003: 272) conducted a study that looked into how community library resources were integrated into teaching and learning programs of local schools in Seshego, South Africa. Questionnaires were administered to teachers as they guaranteed anonymity. Learners from the eleven schools were

interviewed in groups. The investigator is in agreement with Maepa and Mhinga (2003:272), when they argue that the issue of resource based learning is a sensitive issue with educators. The DoE has directed them to follow a newly revised education system, for that reason educators could provide impressive answers that may not be totally honest fearing that their superiors will get wind of what they have articulated.

Major components of the responses obtained from this study were subjective as it dealt with teachers, teacher librarians, and learners' opinions. In such cases, qualitative methods are appropriate as they reveal rich results from the different people approached to participate in a study. Researchers involved in qualitative studies make use of observations, interviews, and focus group discussions to gather data.

### **3.1.1 Data sources**

The following groups were data sources for this investigation:

#### **a) Learners**

The school library plays an integral role in the learning process (Williams & Wavell, 2001). Therefore, it was necessary to gather information from learners to substantiate this fact. The investigator interviewed groups of learners at each of the eleven schools. It was believed that these groups would provide credible information to complete this study (see section 3.3. for more details).

**b) Educators**

The second group of participants in this study were educators. These individuals are facilitators in the learning and teaching processes. The use of a variety of resources is an underlying factor in both processes, making the school library and the teacher librarian key team players in education. As a result, the educators' perceptions and use of the school library were of importance to this study. Questionnaires were distributed to these participants (see section 3.3. for more details).

**c) Teacher librarians**

Each of the eleven primary schools in the Melani Cluster of schools has a teacher librarian. These educators did not fill in questionnaires; instead, they took part in a focus group discussion. This took place after gathering information from the learners and educators. The findings gathered from the educators and learners were discussed. Thereafter the discussion focused on their achievements, opinions, suggestions, challenges, and their recommendations for better school libraries.

**3.1.2. Research design**

This investigation was conducted in four phases. The investigator worked with an assistant in both stages. The first phase involved group interviews with ten learners (see section 3.3. for selection) from each school and secondly administering questionnaires to all educators at the schools (excluding teacher librarians). Once the data collected were analyzed, the third phase involved a focus group discussion with the eleven teacher librarians to solicit their opinion of

the findings, obstacles and recommendations that could lead to the establishment of school libraries in other areas of the Eastern Cape.

Group interviews with learners were conducted in the school libraries with the exception of two schools, which no longer had libraries at the time of the investigation; their group interviews were done in one of the classrooms. Ten learners from each of the eleven schools were interviewed as a group. A standard interview question guide was used at each school (refer to Appendix 3). Eder and Fingerson (2002:181) contend that "interviewing can be used successfully from preschool age through to high school age... to allow learners to give voice to their own interpretations and thoughts rather than rely solely on our adult interpretations of their lives". The learner input was very important as the libraries are in place to help them socially and academically. This gave them the opportunity to describe their experiences of the library.

Educators made use of the questionnaires in the second phase to describe their experience with the library. The questionnaire is discussed in section 3.3.1.

The third phase involved a focus group discussion with the eleven teacher librarians. Morgan (1998:9 & 11) explains that "focus groups are fundamentally a way of listening to people and learning from them...such guided group discussions generate a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs". The information gathered from these discussions shed more light on the

obstacles faced and the impact of the school library resources on teaching and learning.

At the completion of the third phase, the investigator came to the realization that gaps of information existed with regard to the position of school libraries in the school structure as well as the status of the 'school library policy proposal' compiled by ERIS. As a result, the Head of the ERIS unit at the ECED was interviewed telephonically.

The investigator is of the belief that the different phases facilitated the combined use of qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and interpret data.

### **3.2. Sampling**

The subjects of this study were handled in four sets. The first group consisted of learners, secondly educators, the third group was made up of the eleven teacher librarians, and the fourth was the Head of ERIS.

The total number of learners in the Melani Cluster is 1,599. There is an average of +/- 30 learners per class in the whole cluster. Groups of ten learners were selected and interviewed as a group at each school. The method of selection used in this regard was simple random sampling, whereby each learner in each class had a 0% - 100% chance of being selected. The investigator went to the classes and randomly picked a learner by pointing out at them (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1997:87). Each group was seen as a representative sample of learners at each school.

The Melani cluster has sixty- three (63) educators (including principals); this was viewed as a manageable number that could provide valuable data hence the investigator decided to administer questionnaires to all educators at the schools excluding the teacher librarians. (This group was treated separately by participating in a focus group discussion). An important observation made was that principals at all schools teach more than one class due to staff shortages. For that reason, they were asked to fill in the questionnaire as well. Thirty-nine out of the sixty-three questionnaires were returned yielding a sixty two per cent (62%) response rate.

The eleven teacher librarians participated in a focus group discussion at the end of the first phase of data collection.

### **3.3. Data collection**

The practice of using more than one method to gain adequate data is termed 'triangulation'; Onyango (2002:102) defines this practice "as a process where different methods, techniques, and tools of data collection or data sources are combined in a single study." Denzin (1990:511) argues that, "the use of multiple methods in an investigation overcomes the weaknesses or biases of a single method."

To complete this process the investigator sought the help of an assistant. The assistant's responsibilities were to hand out questionnaires while the investigator

selected learners for the group interviews, record, and note down proceedings of the group interviews and the focus group discussion.

This study was conducted in three phases. The first phase involved administering questionnaires to all educators at the eleven schools and interviewing groups of ten learners at each school. This was done simultaneously at each visit to the schools. The questionnaires included open and close-ended questions (see Appendix 2)

Groups of ten learners were interviewed at each school. Eder and Fingerson (2002: 183) advise researchers to avoid formal interviews that could create some sort of tension or fear. Instead, the interviewers should conduct “informal individual and group interviews during free play time, on the playground...” The researcher and her assistant sat with the groups in their libraries and established a friendly environment with the learners. The learners seemed rather tense at the beginning but eventually they opened up and discussed their ideas freely. All interviews were recorded on a digital recorder and saved on a computer for easy analysis (See Appendix 3). The investigator also observed the state of the school libraries and their collections during each school visit.

A focus group discussion was held with the teacher librarians after the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews. This took place at the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Fort Hare

where the investigator worked as a tutor. The institution is within the vicinity of the Melani Schools. The discussion was recorded to facilitate the analysis process. (See Appendix 4 for focus group discussion questions)

Lastly, the Head of the ERIS unit based at the province's DoE was interviewed telephonically to offer clarification on persisting issues that rose from data obtained at the first and second phase of the investigation. (The interview questions are listed in Appendix 5)

### **3.3.1. Data collection tools**

Questionnaires, a group interview guide, and focus group discussion questions were the tools utilized to obtain credible information in this study. The development of these tools was guided by the research questions.

#### **The Questionnaire (Appendix 2)**

The questions in the questionnaire were divided into six categories. The first category covered respondent information. The aim was to describe the respondent pool according to gender, age group and teaching experience. The next section titled '*Library Use*' intended to gather information with regard to how often the educators use the library facility, why they do so, what would make them use it more and lastly whether the library is marketed to educators and learners. The information obtained in this section answers Question Three of the research questions in chapter one that focuses on educators, the library and its resources.



The third category entitled '*Library Materials/Resources*' focused on whether the educators incorporated resources in their teaching. Learner interaction with the materials was also questioned. The educators were also asked about the quantity and quality of the resources and whether they were organized to facilitate use. This provided key information to answer Questions One and Two in section 1.5. that look into access and use of the library resources.

In order to determine whether there have been any significant changes in the learners academic achievement to respond to Question Two in section 1.5., two questions were included under the heading '*Academic Performance*'.

The focus of the study is teacher librarians; therefore, the investigator included a section that would enable the educators to rate the service they obtain from their teacher librarians. The last segment centered on the '*School Library Sustainability*'. These last two segments provide important information relating to the support the libraries receive from the DoE, School Management and the teacher librarians. This information was required to respond to Question Four of the research questions.

### **Learners group interview guide (Appendix 3)**

The categories for the interview questions were similar to those of the questionnaire for the educators. The same information was needed but in this case from the learners' perspective. Interviews were recorded by a digital tape recorder, transcribed and stored on computer.

### **Focus group discussion questions (Appendix 4)**

These questions were developed after the analysis of the Learners' group interviews and educator questionnaires. The findings were shared with teacher librarians and pertinent issues were discussed. The teacher librarians were also asked to comment on their marketing strategies, challenges and probable solutions. The investigator was of the opinion that this provided the teacher librarians with an opportunity to provide their side of the story. The discussion was recorded, transcribed and stored on computer.

### **Interview questions for the head of ERIS (Appendix 5)**

The educators, learners, and teacher librarians were all given a chance to comment on the sustainability of the school libraries. Thereafter the investigator thought it necessary for the DoE to comment on the matter as well. Two questions were thus put to the Head of the ERIS unit. Details provided answered Question Four of the research questions.

### **3.4. Data analysis**

The different data collection methods utilized in this study eased the analysis process and presentation of data in Chapter Four.

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed with the aid of the Microsoft Excel Programme. In Chapter Four, the data is presented by way of bar charts, the percentage distribution in the form of pie charts and tables.

The qualitative data generated from the open-ended questions were read and analysed in order to establish consistent themes. Bogdan and Taylor (1975:79) describe this activity as “a process which entails an effort to identify formal themes and to construct hypotheses as they are suggested by the data and attempt to demonstrate support from these themes and hypotheses.”

The field notes and recordings from the group interviews were also categorized into themes. As for the focus group discussion Krueger, (1998:21) advises that the objectives of the research plan should guide the analysis. He says that:

“When a plan is developed, the intent is to seek information of a certain type. The number of focus groups, the categories of people selected for the focus groups, the locations of the participants, or other demographic factors all help guide the analysis process.”

He further advises researchers to consider the following while analyzing data obtained from such discussions:

Consider the internal consistency, the frequency of comments, the extensiveness of comments, the specificity of responses and what was not said... There is a tendency to assume that frequency, extensiveness and intensity are synonymous. In fact these three factors are really quite different. Here is an easy way to remember them. Frequency: *How often was it said?* Extensiveness: *How many people said it?* Intensity: *How strong was the opinion or the point of view?*  
(Krueger, 1998: 35)

The analysis of the data obtained was guided by the research plan. The plan was to share findings from the first phase with the teacher librarians, and seek clarification, comments, and suggestions. The investigator and her assistant took notes of what was said, and the conversation was recorded. Thereafter the notes were compared and the recording listened to. This enabled the investigator to register the key issues that developed from the discussion. Non-verbal communication is something to take note of too whilst conducting such

discussions, (AAIR, 2004). It was noted that the teacher librarians were relaxed and conversed freely.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4. Findings and Discussions**

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the findings emerging from the data analysis. This includes results analysed from the questionnaires, interviews, observation, and a focus group discussion. The findings of this study have been clustered into themes. For each theme the investigator reports and comments on responses from the four sets of respondents of the study i.e. learners, educators, teacher librarians and the Head of ERIS. A section pertaining to the investigator's observation of the school libraries is also included. For the sake of consistency tables, pie and bar charts are recorded as figures within the text.

#### **4.1. The state of the Melani Cluster School Libraries**

Section 1.4 explains how the Melani Cluster School Libraries Pilot Project was established in 2002. Eleven nominated teachers were to take part in a training programme to prepare them to run their individual school libraries. Four trainers prepared the programme to train teacher librarians. Two were from the University of Fort Hare, Department of Library and Information Science whilst the others were specialists on school librarianship from ERIS. Training took place at the model library at the Melani Junior Primary School two Mondays per month from 2003 to 2004 (see appendix 1). At the completion of the training programme, schools were provided with resources to start their school libraries. The resources included books, magazines, posters, and pamphlets. The majority of the fiction resources are in Xhosa followed by English and very few are in Afrikaans. The model library is the first stop for all resources and equipment

destined for the cluster libraries, meaning that all resources and equipment are delivered, registered and processed at the cluster library and thereafter dispatched to the other ten schools. The teacher librarians meet on a regular basis to process materials. At the time of this study, the resources within the school libraries were donations. Most of the donors requested to hand over resources officially to obtain recognition. These events took place at the cluster library.

Permission was sought from the DoE district office in Fort Beaufort to conduct the investigation. The investigator visited all the eleven schools to collect data. Learner interviews were held in the school libraries to observe the condition of the libraries and the resources within. The first significant observation was that out of the eleven libraries only nine were operational at the time of the study. Two of the schools, Tembani and Gwali Primary Schools, had closed their libraries. Tembani Primary School had just moved into a new building that did not have space for a library, hence all the library resources were packed in the principal's office. While Gwali Primary School was undergoing renovations, and due to lack of a suitable storage space for construction supplies, the library was forfeited. The library resources in this school were stored in classroom cupboards and the staff room.

This challenged the investigator as the study focused on school libraries. However, despite the absence of school library rooms in these two schools,

learners were still using the resources during class periods and for private reading. The teacher librarians were responsible for the collections. The teacher librarians were responsible for storage of the resources in the different classrooms or offices, distribution and promoting use of the resources. For that reason questionnaires were still distributed to all educators. The questions for the group learner interviews were slightly changed. Instead of asking how often they used the library (see appendix 3), the investigator inquired whether they knew what libraries were. The question regarding resources remained the same.

Space and reading facilities in a library play an important role in encouraging use. None of the schools had a purpose built library; instead, each of the eleven schools converted one of their classrooms into a library facility. Only four out of the nine schools (with libraries at the time of the investigation) had library rooms with reading space that can accommodate tables and chairs. Four school libraries did not have sufficient reading space, tables and chairs whereas one does have sufficient space but lacks tables and chairs. Shelves and book trolleys were provided by the project, but it was observed that they were not enough to store the available collections. Nevertheless, the teacher librarians have tried to improvise by arranging other resources on tables. Part of the training covered such situations whereby teacher librarians were encouraged to be creative and improvise where certain equipment would be lacking. This section of the training was entitled '*library on a shoestring*' (see appendix 1). It was observed that the

teachers had been successful in organizing their collection. Figure 12 in section 4.4.1 supports this observation.

#### **4.2. Use of the school library and its resources**

The approximate number of library resources per library at the time of the study was as follows:

English fiction- 149 books

English non-fiction- 140 books

English textbooks and samples from publishers – 110 books

Reference books (Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries and Atlases) – 30

Xhosa fiction – 160 books

Afrikaans fiction – 10 books

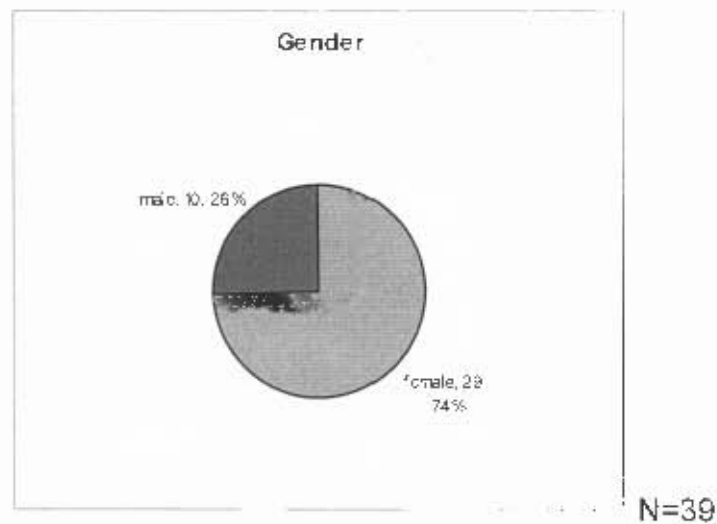
Magazines, posters and pamphlets - 40

Information with regard to the use of the school libraries and resources therein was obtained from the educators' questionnaires and learners' interviews. The teacher librarians thereafter were shown these results and their input included in the findings. The following is a brief description of the respondents in all phases of the study.

##### **4.2.1. Respondent information**

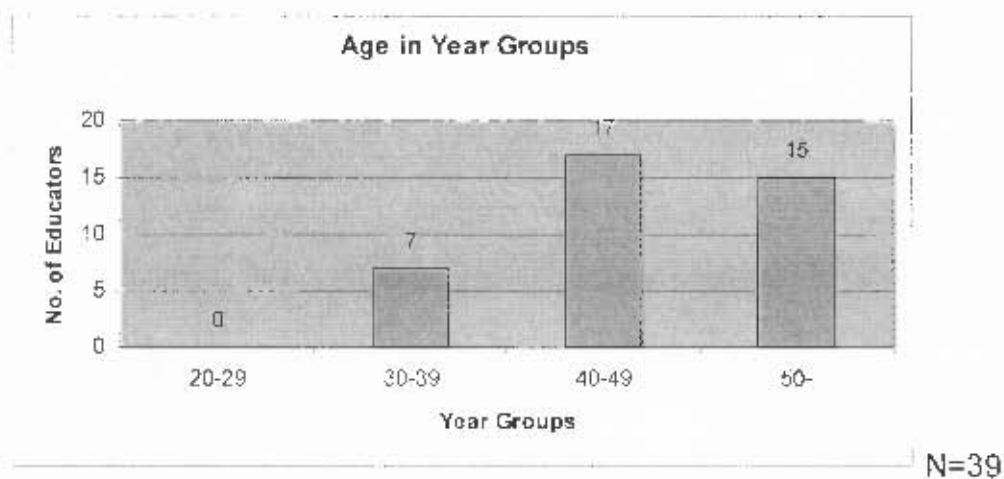
Out of the sixty three (63) questionnaires distributed to educators, thirty nine (39 or 62%) questionnaires were returned. The gender and age group distribution is shown in figure 1 and 2:





**Figure 1**

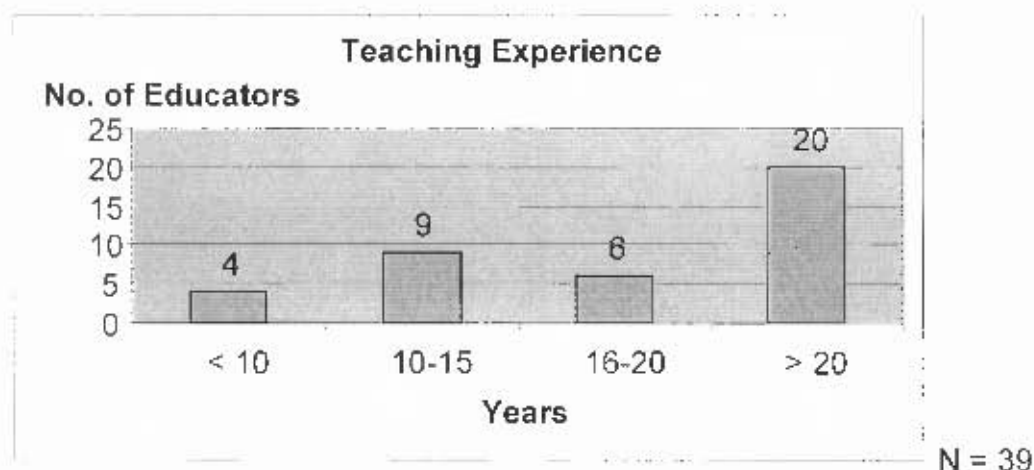
Figure 1 shows that the majority of the respondents (29 or 74%) were female.



**Figure 2**

With respect to age, most of the respondents (17 or 44%) were in the 40-49 age group. An observation made by the investigator during visits to the schools was that all the school principals were teaching instead of solely concentrating on school administration. For that reason they were also requested to fill in the

questionnaires like other educators. Figure 3 shows the length of teaching experience of the respondents.

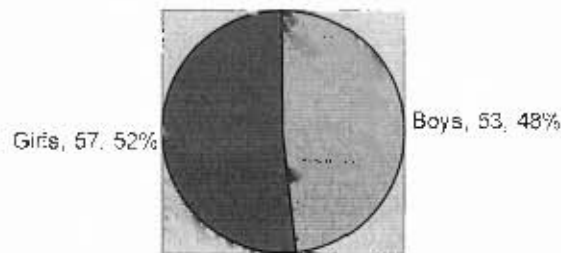


**Figure 3**

Most of the respondents (20 or 51%) have taught for over twenty years, while the experience of second largest group of respondents (9 or 23%) ranges between ten to fifteen years. This shows that the information obtained was from a seasoned group of individuals in the teaching field. Such individuals have developed certain philosophies of teaching and learning over the years, for instance teaching methods or styles, which may affect the way they relate to school libraries. While this investigation did not examine teaching practices, the investigator is in agreement with Bell and Totten (1992:84) as cited by Hart (1999) on the need to study educators' instructional practices. Results from such an investigation could lead to developing means of helping educators see school libraries as an important part of teaching and learning.

The total number of learners who took part in the group interviews was 110. The gender and age distribution of these respondents is illustrated by figures 4 and 5.

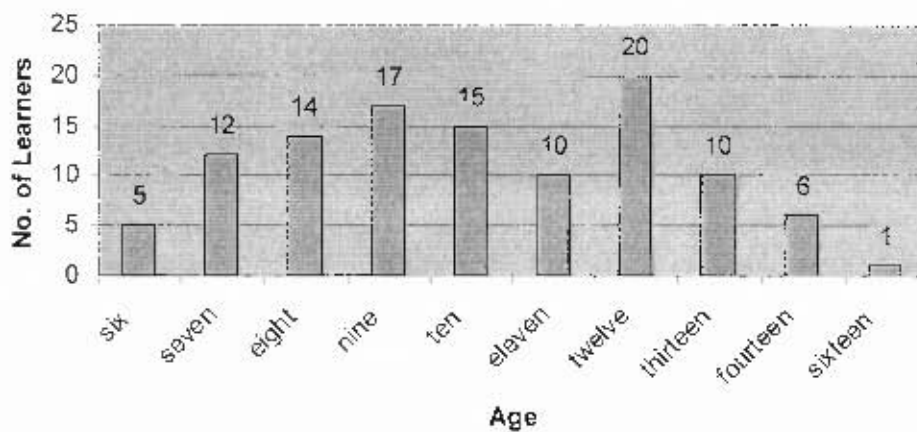
**Gender distribution of Learners**



N=110

**Figure 4**

**Learners Age Range**



N=110

**Figure 5**

Figure 4 shows that the majority of the learners were girls. This reflects the findings of other organizations i.e. United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), (UNICEF, 2003) and Cisco Learning Institute (Cisco, 2006), that "South Africa

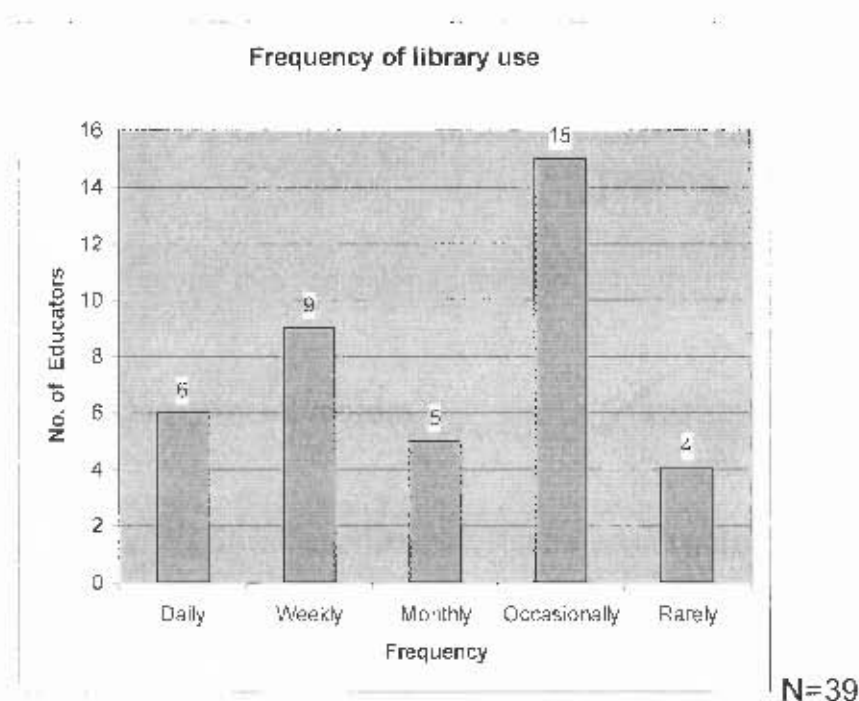
has the highest levels of female education at all stages in comparison to other developing countries.” Figure 5 indicates the age range of learners. The sample of 110 learners interviewed from the eleven schools ranged from six to sixteen years old. This is a representative group age wise.

#### **4.3. Library use**

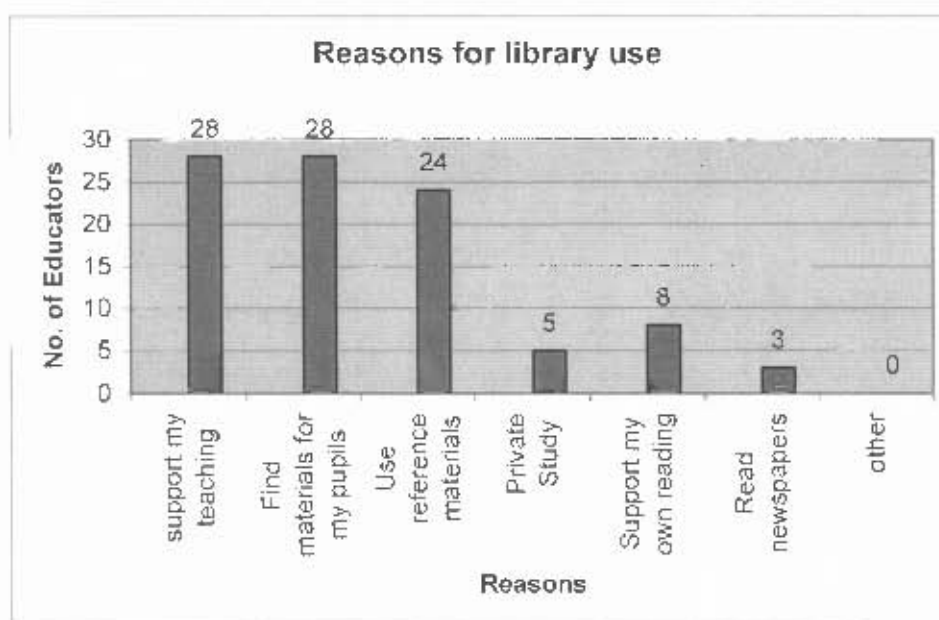
When the teacher librarianship training was completed, all eleven participating schools had libraries. Minutes from the project’s executive committee meetings (2003-2005) confirm this. However only nine were operational at the time of the investigation. Reasons for this are given in section 4.1.

##### **4.3.1. Use of the library by educators.**

The investigator wished to find out how often the educators used the school library and why they did. The responses are illustrated in figure 6 and 7.

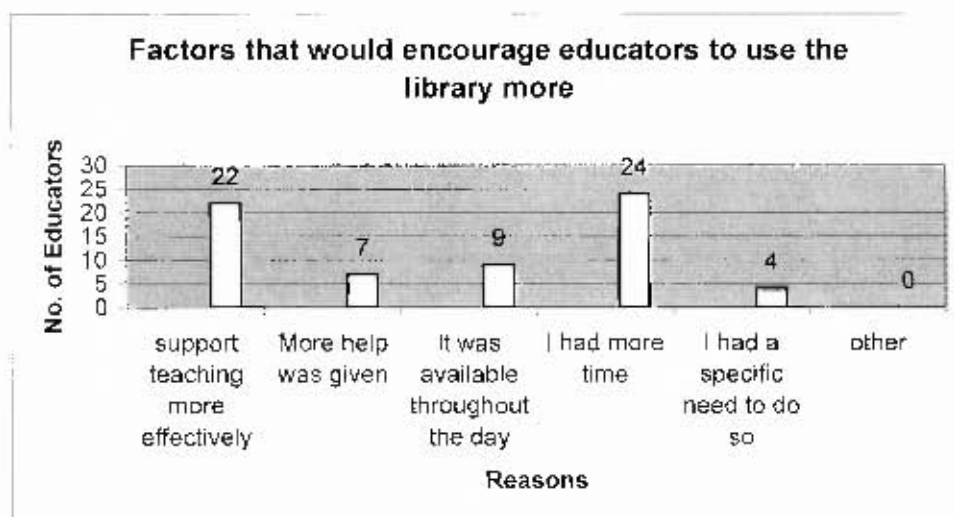


**Figure 6**



**Figure 7**

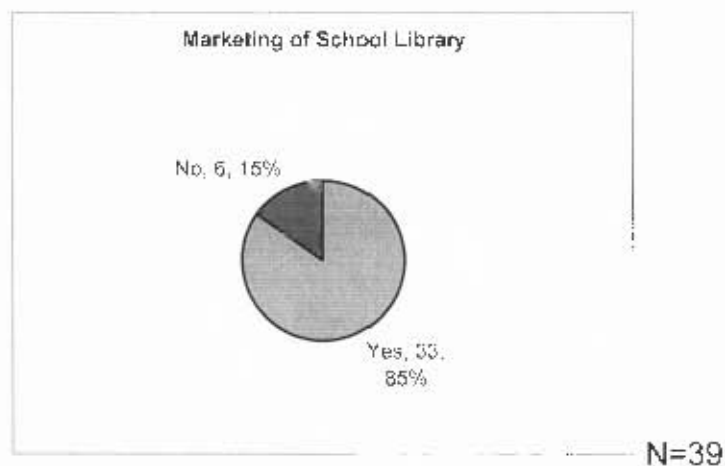
The single most highly rated frequency for library use was fifteen (38%), showing that educators occasionally used the library room (Fig. 6). The two most common reasons for doing so were to support their teaching (28 or 72%) and find materials for their learners (28 or 72%). However twenty (20 or 51%) used the library on a regular basis (i.e. daily, weekly and monthly). The educators were further probed to point out what would make them use the library more. Figure 8 displays their response.



**Figure 8**

Twenty four (62%) of the respondents indicated that they would use the library more if they had time to spare. The next most common reason was that they would use the facility more if it supported their teaching more effectively (22 or 56%). The principals indicated that their schools are short-staffed. This response supports the observation by the majority of teachers that they would use the library if they were less pressed for time.

When questioned about their awareness of the library, thirty three (85%) of the respondents pointed out that the school library is marketed to learners and educators. The educators who indicated that their libraries were marketed (33 or 85%) were asked who did the marketing; the majority (27 or 70%) specified that the teacher librarians did so. Four (10%) claimed the Americans (S.A. Partners NGO) were responsible and two (5%) mentioned the librarians from the United Kingdom (Ikhwezi; an NGO operating from the United Kingdom that serves the Melani Schools).



**Figure 9**

#### **4.3.2 Use of the library by learners**

Learners in their group interviews were asked how often they visited the library and why they did so. The response was almost every day, indicating that the learners frequently used the school libraries. Learners explained that the library is a place where they found information for their schoolwork, homework and storybooks for fun. Pupils at the schools that had closed their libraries were asked whether they knew what libraries are. Their response was positive. When asked if they had been in a library before their response was negative. They claimed that they had seen libraries on SCHOOL T.V. a popular South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) program.

The learners specified that their class teachers encourage them to use the library and the resources. Learners from nine schools knew who their teacher librarian is, whilst those from the two schools that did not have school libraries did not know.

The findings with regard to library use seem to indicate that the libraries indeed were in use although there is room for improvement. The responses also indicate that teacher librarians despite their heavy workloads marketed the libraries. According to the learners' response, it would seem that the teacher librarians marketed the library to their colleagues more than to learners. The class teachers during class periods encouraged their learners to use the facility and its resources.

#### **4.3.3. The views of teacher librarians with regard to library use**

The investigator gave the teacher librarians the opportunity to read a summary of the information obtained from the educators' questionnaires and learners' interviews during the focus group discussion. The investigator used the prepared focus group questions (see appendix 4) to guide the discussion. The investigator's assistant handled the digital tape recorder and transcribed the proceedings. The investigator also took notes, which were later on crosschecked against the recording and the assistant's notes.

The teacher librarians in the focus group discussion were in agreement with their colleagues that educators would use the resources more if they had more time and if the resources would sufficiently meet the needs of the whole school community. Their argument was that the materials were more learner oriented. Although this is appreciated, the investigator noted that resources that would help teachers improve their teaching were also in demand.



The discussion revealed that most schools were short staffed, forcing principals to actively teach even more than one class at times. Some educators were also responsible for more than one class.

Teacher redeployment causes a lot of confusion, including the disruption of prepared library programmes. The participants explained teacher re-deployment as a strategy used by the DoE to ensure balanced educator learner ratios at schools. At the time of the investigation, the educator learner ratio stood at one educator to thirty learners (1:30). ECED officials would normally visit schools to determine that the ratios were intact. In situations where educators were in excess, the ECED would request the extra educators to leave the particular school and seek employment elsewhere. The DoE does not place these educators in schools that are short staffed instead, they advise them to seek schools in need of educators in Government Gazettes. Teacher librarians are subject to the same procedures. Fortunately at the time of the study, none of the teacher librarians was redeployed. However, some of their colleagues whom they had worked with to organize library programmes had been forced to leave.

#### 4.4. Library materials

The aim of this section was to determine whether the library resources are used.

##### 4.4.1 Outlook of educators with regard to library materials

Thirty four (87%) of the educators who took part in the study declared that they incorporated the library resources in their teaching programmes.

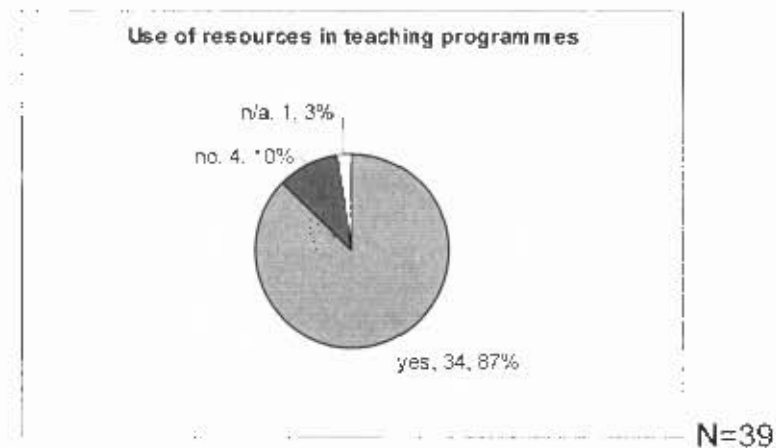
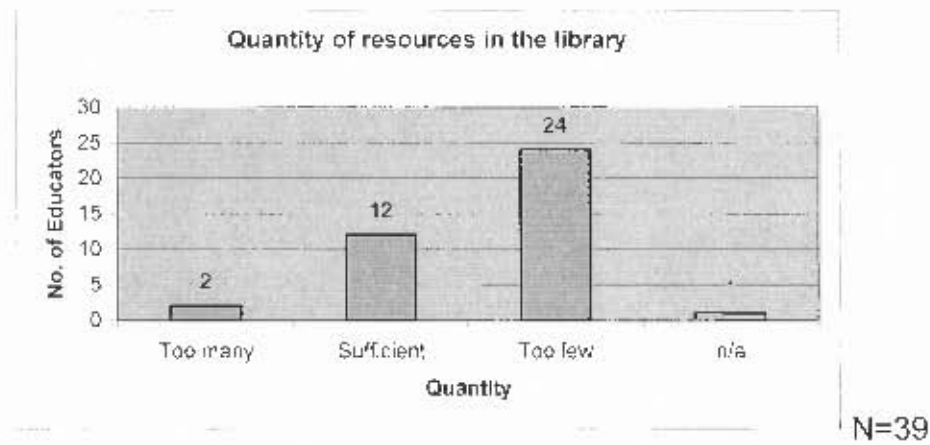


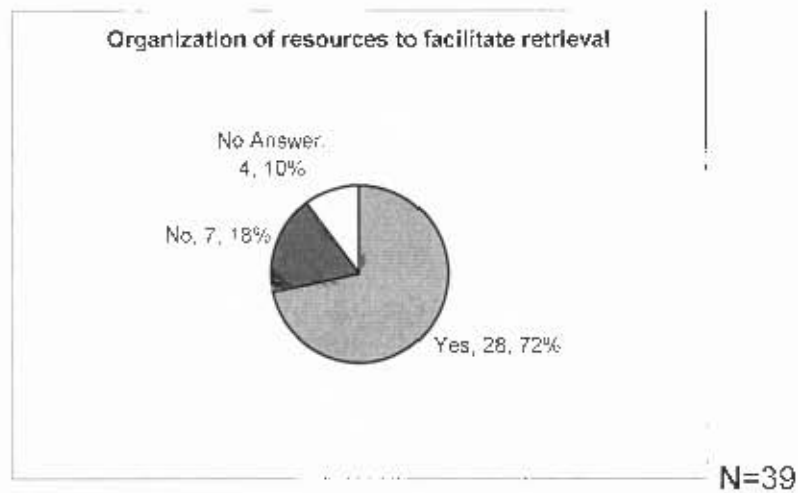
Figure 10

This would sound promising and in agreement with the Revised National Curriculum Statement which requires educators to do this. However, the results shown in figure 11 indicate that twenty four (62%) of the respondents were of the view that the resources were too few. This is clearly not favourable for resource-based learning. The multi-skilled and knowledgeable citizens the RNCS aims at developing need to have access to a variety of resources (DoE: RNCS-Parent Guide, 2005). In the absence of these resources, educators have no choice but resort to their traditional style of teaching where the educator serves as the fountain of knowledge as described by Hart (2003:9).



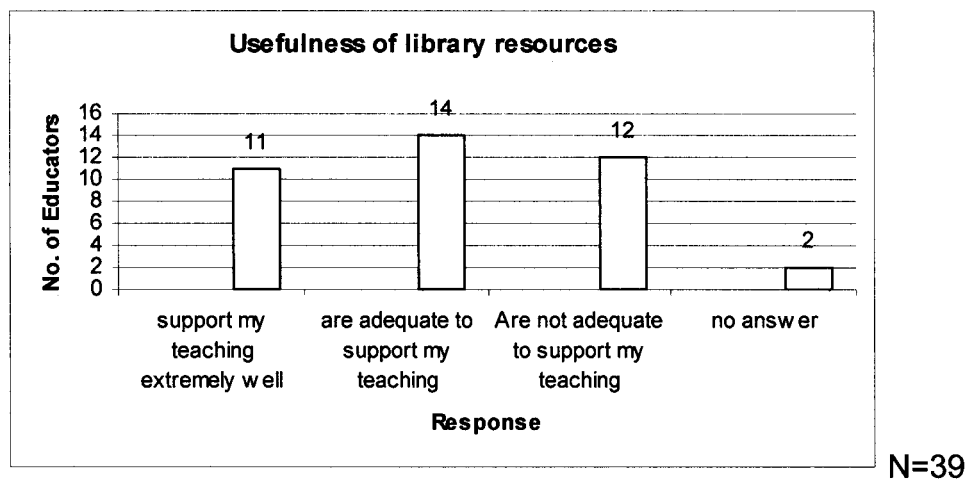
**Figure 11**

The educators were asked whether the resources were organized to facilitate easy retrieval. Figure 12 shows their response. The majority (28 or 72%) indicated that the resources were organized for easy retrieval.



**Figure 12**

Educators were also asked about the usefulness of the library resources. Figure 13 shows their response.



**Figure 13**

Fourteen (36%) felt that the materials adequately supported their teaching. The explanation provided to support this view was that the resources cover what the curriculum entails. On the other hand twelve (31%) disagreed, contending that the resources were for primary learners only and that they would prefer resources that would help them develop their careers as educators. They also argued that the resources were too few. Those who claimed that the materials supported their teaching extremely well did not provide an explanation even though they were given the opportunity to do so.

After determining the usefulness of the resources, the investigator wanted to find out how often educators recommend resources to learners. Their response is illustrated in figure 14.

### Frequency that educators recommend resources to learners

Frequency	No. of Educators	Percentage
Frequently	20	52%
Occasionally	13	33%
Rarely	4	10%
Never	2	5%

N=39

**Figure 14**

More than half of the respondents (20 or 52%) recommended resources to their learners frequently. This might be a reassurance that the resources were actively used and not gathering dust in boxes or shelves. This is in agreement with the response provided by the learners in section 4.3.2 where it was indicated that their class teachers encouraged them to use the library. Nevertheless, there is a need to encourage the remaining nineteen (48%) to recommend resources to their learners. This may possibly encourage learners to utilize more library resources or more frequently than they do at present. In addition to information about recommending resources to learners, the investigator was interested to know how often the educators took learners to the library. Figure 15 shows their response.

### Number of times educators take learners to the library

Frequency	No. of Educators	Percentage
Frequently	14	36%
Occasionally	9	23%
Rarely	3	8%
Never	7	18%
No answer	6	15%

N=39

**Figure 15**

This response shows a similar pattern as in that of section 4.3.1, which tried to determine the frequency of library use. Those who took learners to the library frequently (14 or 36%) were outnumbered by those who did so occasionally, rarely, and never (19 or 49%). The response in section 4.3.1 showed that the majority of educators used the library occasionally.

Arguably, the educators' ability to recommend resources and take learners to the library could mean that learners read or use sources that their educators think are most suitable. It was of interest to find out whether learners had access to the library in their free time. Perhaps this would encourage their leisure reading. The response was as follows:

### **Learners' access to the library in their free time**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of Educators</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	22	56%
No	16	41%
No answer	1	3%

N=39

**Figure 16**

Flexible scheduling has been described as a means that could improve learners' access to and use of resources (Needham, 2003). The educators' response (22 or 56%) seems to indicate that there are plans in place that allow learners to access resources in their free time. The teacher librarian, educators, and school management advisably should develop plans that will encourage more use of the library resources. One way of doing this is by allowing learners to access school library resources during recess, free periods or a certain period after school hours.

One of the roles of school libraries is to develop information literate citizens who will be competent in society. For that reason it is necessary to teach learners certain skills that will enable them recognize the need for information and how to select, understand, evaluate and communicate it. In view of that, the educators were asked whether learners have been taught how to find resources. Their opinion pertaining to their learners' prior knowledge of how to use libraries was also sought. Their responses are as indicated in figures 17 and 18.

**Educators' response relating to learners being taught how to find resources**

<b>Response</b>	<b>No. of Educators</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	19	49%
No	6	15%
I do not know	1	3%
No answer	13	33%

N=39

**Figure 17**

The responses presented in figure 17 indicate that there is room for improvement. The teacher librarians need to continue offering information literacy training at the schools, which amongst other skills equips learners with the ability to find and use resources. The outcomes set out by RNCS will not be achieved if learners are not information literate, hence Eisenberg, Spitzer, and Lowe's (1998:132) argument that "educational restructuring makes information skills necessary..." The ERIS Policy Proposal for School Libraries (2002:3) points out that it is the teacher librarians' responsibility to develop and implement information literacy programmes for the school community.

The investigator was keen to know whether learners had prior knowledge of how to use libraries and their resources. The response was as follows:



**Educators' opinions of learners' prior knowledge of how to use libraries and resources therein.**

Response	No. of Educators	Percentage
Yes	16	41%
No	21	54%
No answer	2	5%

N=39

**Figure 18**

The majority (21 or 54%) indicated that their learners did not have prior knowledge of how to use libraries. However, it was encouraging to know that sixteen (41%) thought that their learners had had some experience with libraries. On the other hand, with hindsight the investigator realized that she had overlooked the necessity to establish the indicators the educators used to conclude that their learners knew how to use libraries.

The educators were asked to indicate whether they took resources out of the libraries for learners in their classrooms. The majority (26 or 67%) indicated that they did, whilst two (5%) disagreed and eleven (28%) did not respond. Figure 19 shows their response.

**Educators' response pertaining to taking resources from the library to learners' classrooms.**

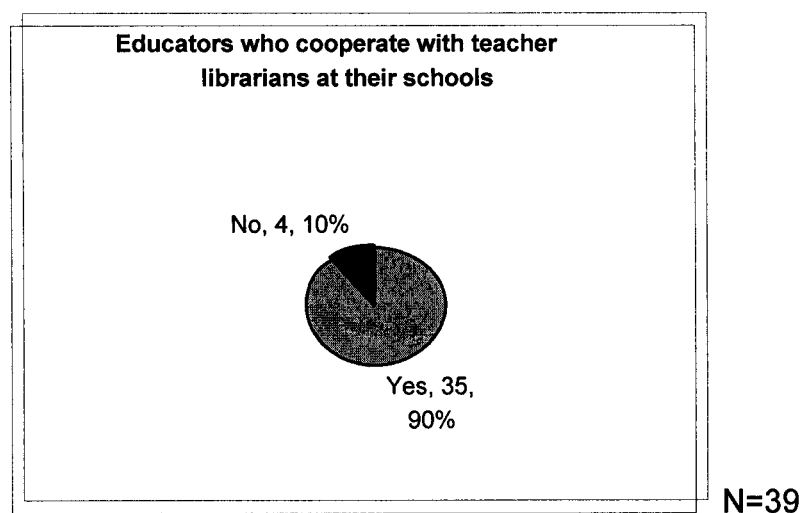
Response	No. of Educators	Percentage
Yes	26	67%
No	2	5%
No answer	11	28%

N=39

**Figure 19**

Many authorities on the subject agree that the success of the school libraries relies on the teacher librarians' cooperation with fellow educators (Asselin, 2004, Farmer 2002 and Needham, 2003). The investigator sought to know how many educators cooperated with their teacher librarians.

The response as reflected in figure 20 reveals that the majority (35 or 90%) of the respondents considered cooperation as important.



**Figure 20**

The educators were further probed about their collaboration; the common patterns of responses were as follows:

1. "The teacher librarian has taught us how to use the resources and has encouraged us to motivate learners to read".
2. "We help the teacher librarian to organize and maintain the library."
3. "Whenever I need assistance the teacher librarian readily provides help."
4. "At staff meetings we discuss the challenges faced by our library."
5. "We teach learners how to check books out and the rules of the library."

#### **4.4.2. Learners' viewpoint with regard to the library's resources**

The objective here was to establish whether learners actually use the resources.

When the learners were asked which library materials they liked, most of them pointed out that they loved the storybooks in the collection. They went on to mention some of their favourite titles in English and Xhosa. The learners said that the resources in the library help them to do their school work and homework. Out of the eleven schools, learners from the nine schools that had operational libraries indicated that they are allowed to take the library materials home. Learners from the two schools without libraries said that their class teachers offer them materials such as books and posters to work with and read in class. These resources are stored in classroom cabinets.

The first person they approached whenever they needed assistance with resources was their class teachers. The investigator wanted to find out whether they knew who their teacher librarians were. Learners from nine schools knew who their teacher librarians were, while those from the remaining two schools without operational libraries did not.

Two schools, specifically Lower Gqumashe and Mc Farlan primary schools, have involved learners in the running of the library. These assistants help while the teacher librarians are busy for instance during recess or free periods. Most of the learners have been taught by their class teachers and teacher librarians how to find and use the resources. This is therefore in agreement with what the educators reported in the questionnaires.

One fact that was repeated by most learners was that most of the fiction resources in their libraries were in Xhosa. They expressed their desire for more resources in English and Afrikaans. This could mean that they have realized these are the commercial languages in South Africa, for example completing bank transactions. Teacher librarians should consider this demand because they are in charge of collection development. On the other hand, this is not always easy, if the project relies on donors.

According to the project's executive committee minutes (2003-2005), the project has thus far received resources from four additional donors besides the NGO, S.A. Partners that initiated the project. When the project commenced, S.A. Partners offered money to the schools to purchase resources. The teacher librarians therefore put their collection development skills into practice and purchased materials for the school libraries. This was done under the supervision of the trainers. The other four donors have donated resources they deemed fit for the schools. The intentions of these donors are honourable, but on the other

hand, this undermines collection development aspects that aim at providing users with what they need and want.

One could argue that *'beggars cannot be choosers'* therefore, the schools should be grateful for whatever they receive. However, the investigator is in agreement with Hart (2003:14) when she argues that donors and volunteers cannot support school libraries alone. The Government or in this case the DoE could provide learners and educators the power of choice. Then again, this is difficult in the absence of a National School Library Policy. Such a policy would guide teacher librarians in building collections for their schools and how to handle donations.

#### **4.4.3. The views of teacher librarians on the library resources**

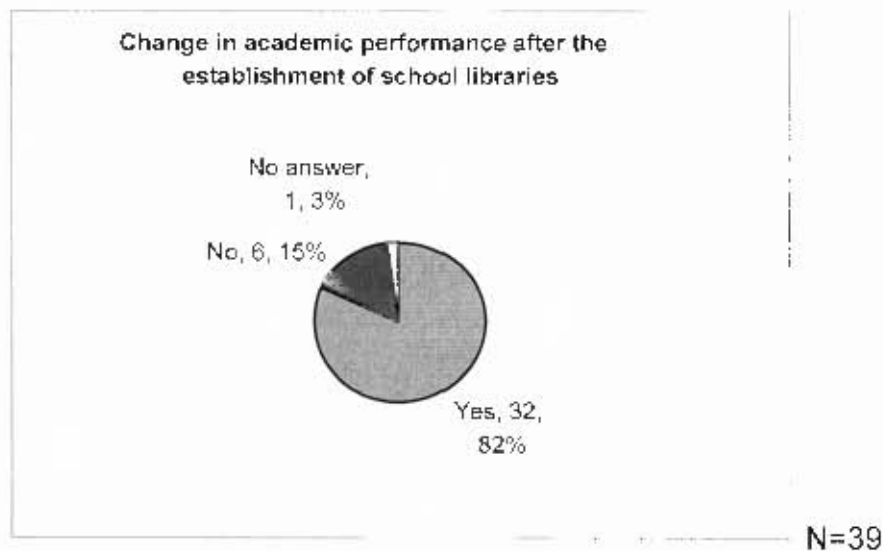
The teacher librarians were in agreement with what both learners and educators had to say about the library materials. Their main concern was that the collection is not balanced. The majority of the resources are storybooks. Hence, it is difficult to incorporate them into teaching and learning as required by the RNCS. They also supported the learners in their desire for more resources in English. English was described as a universal language that enables individuals to communicate with the different ethnic groups in South Africa. Another point was that the resources are mainly for primary or junior learning. More materials on teaching skills would be appreciated. It was noted that this would only be possible with more funding. At the time of the investigation the needs of the learners were a priority; hence the collection had more resources for learners than for educators.

Clarity was sought with regard to why educators take learners to the library and how they incorporate resources in their teaching programmes. The teacher librarians were reluctant to discuss this. This could have been the same experience as that of Maepa and Mhinga (2003:272); they argued that resource based learning and teaching is a sensitive issue with educators. For that reason educators are not always forthcoming on the matter. When asked what was regarded as free time for learners, the responses were recess and periods when educators would not be in a class.

#### **4.5. Academic performance**

##### **4.5.1. Educators' opinions**

The contribution of school libraries to academic achievement is well documented (Dresang & Kotrla, 2003:55; Lance, 2002 and Scholastic, 2004). Therefore, the investigator was interested to verify this in the Melani Cluster. This section of the questionnaire posed two questions. The first sought to determine any significant change in academic performance; whilst the second asked where learners got most support to develop a culture of reading.



**Figure 21**

The majority (32 or 82%) of the educators who responded confirmed what other researchers have concluded viz., that libraries do contribute to academic achievement. The educators were requested to provide an explanation supporting their response. Those who agreed with this view explained that their learners' reading skills and their ability to speak in English had improved immensely. This was interesting as most of the resources are in Xhosa. It would seem that the schools are making the most of the few English resources that they have. Six (15%) disagreed claiming that they did not have a library room and were short staffed thus they do not use the resources as they think they should. Another reason provided was that the resources were not sufficient.

The RNCS emphasizes the need for learners to develop the culture of reading. This would be difficult in the absence of the support of educators, teacher librarians, and the school principals. In view of that, the investigator sought to know from whom learners received most support. The question required the

respondent to mark 'yes' or 'no' for each group that they thought offers such support (See Appendix 2, Question 4.2.)

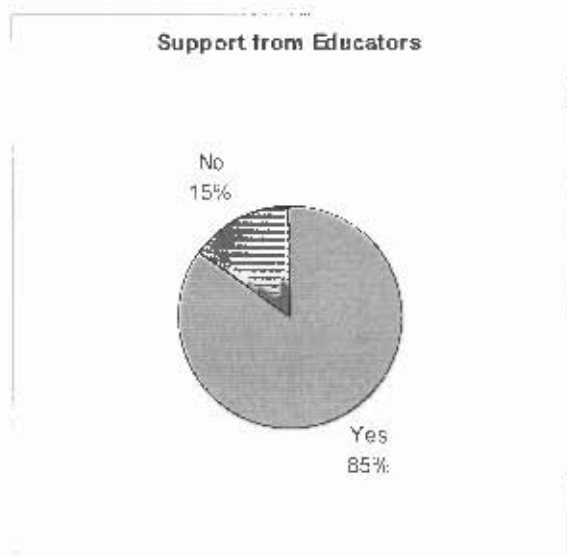


Figure 22 (a)

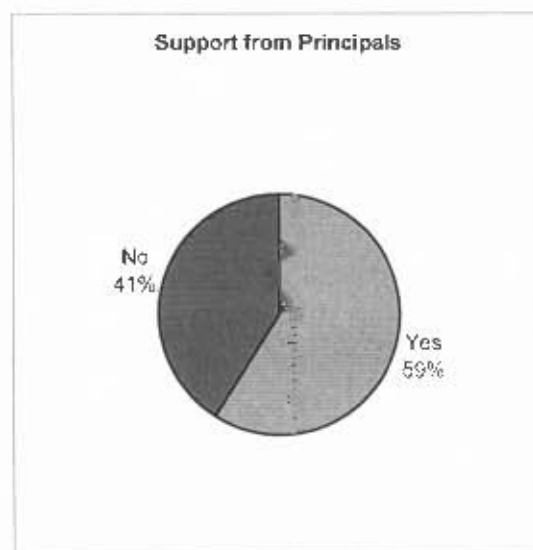


Figure 22 (b)

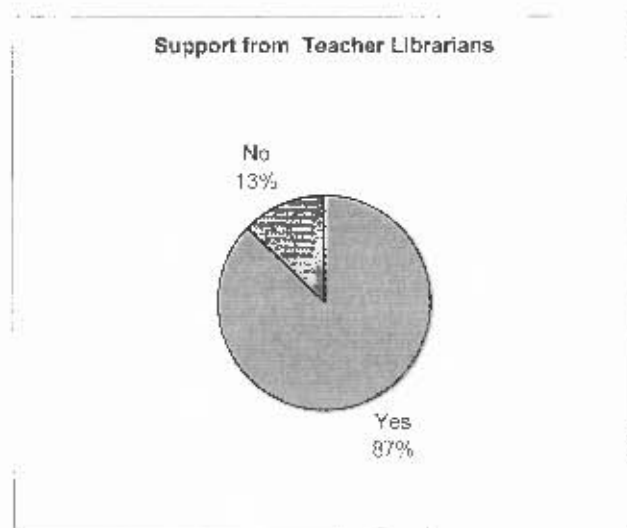


Figure 22 (c) (N=39)



Figure 22 (c) shows that the teacher librarians are in the forefront (34 or 87%) of instilling the culture of reading in learners. However, their fellow educators are not lagging far behind either as described in Figure 22(a) (33 or 85%). The principals ranked last (23 or 59%); this could be because most principals are mainly administrators. It was noted that all principals actively teach in all schools, hence it was assumed that these individuals supported the learners in their capacity as educators more than that of school principals. When asked to explain their answer two patterns of responses emerged:

1. "The teacher librarians are dedicated and work hard at motivating learners to read."
2. "The educators and teacher librarians work together hence providing learners with the necessary support that they need."

#### **4.5.2. Viewpoint of the teacher librarians**

The focus group discussion revealed that the teacher librarians felt rewarded in that their efforts were noticed. Nonetheless, they pinpointed that cooperation amongst educators is not always that smooth. Their argument is that at the beginning when the libraries were established all educators were committed to the plan of developing a culture of reading at their schools. The challenge has been to remain consistent to this plan. Certain activities had not been done as planned. Change does not always occur overnight as experienced by Needham (2003), who remarks that it took her ten years to establish a smooth running library programme. Collaboration may perhaps improve with time.

Reading competitions and writing stories on cultural events were activities used to motivate learners. The teacher librarians also used the opportunity of encouraging learners at school assemblies. The teacher librarians talked to the learners about the library and how they could benefit from the facility and resources within.

#### **4.6. Assessment of library service by educators**

The educators were requested to describe their teacher librarians according to a set of competencies. The outline of competencies was adapted and slightly modified to suit the South African context from the Canadian Association of School Libraries (CASL, 2005). Figure 23 describes how the educators scored their teacher librarians service in a descending order.

### Educators' opinions concerning the service offered by the teacher librarians.

Competence	Agree		Disagree		Uncertain	
Would you describe your school's teacher librarian as an individual who...	No. of Educators	%	No. of Educators	%	No. of Educators	%
provides appropriate information, resources or instruction to satisfy the needs of learners and educators.	38	97%	0	0%	1	3%
provides leadership	37	95%	0	0%	2	5%
has effective communications skills.	36	92%	2	5%	1	3%
works well with others (educators) in a team	36	92%	0	0%	3	8%
promotes reading programmes and cultural events	36	92%	0	0%	3	8%
is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change e.g. the South African Education System	36	92%	0	0%	3	8%
is committed to lifelong learning	35	89%	1	3%	3	8%
plans, prioritizes and focuses on what is important.	34	87%	1	3%	4	10%
is committed to programme excellence.	32	82 %	1	3%	6	15%
understands learners and their social, emotional, and intellectual needs	32	82%	0	0%	7	18%
looks for partnerships and alliances e.g. other schools, institutions, potential donors etc.	29	74%	0	0%	10	26%
knows the curriculum program mandated by the Dept. of Education.	26	67%	2	5%	11	28%

N=39

**Figure 23**

The overall result seems to show that most of the educators are satisfied with and confident in the service that their teacher librarians provide. Nevertheless it would seem that teacher librarians are found wanting in certain areas. The competencies that respondents showed greater uncertainty with were regarding knowledge of the curriculum mandated by the DoE (11 or 28%), looking for partnerships and alliances (10 or 26%) and understanding the social, emotional and intellectual needs of their learners (7 or 18%).

The DoE has released statements reassuring parents that educators have been trained and equipped to implement the RNCS (DoE: RNCS-Parents Guide, 2005:2). This includes teacher librarians from the Melani Cluster. In addition, these teacher librarians received training (which included OBE and school libraries) that would enable them to run a school library effectively and efficiently. Nevertheless change requires time; in all probability, it will take time for the teacher librarians to perfect themselves to carry out the RNCS. The other two competencies that showed slightly disturbing results were with regard to planning, prioritizing and focusing on what is important as well as committing to programme excellence. It is important to note that the teacher librarians do not receive any remuneration for their services.

#### **4.6.1. Teacher librarians' opinions with regard to what their fellow educators registered about their service.**

As already stated, the teacher librarians were given the information derived from the educators' questionnaire. This included details pertaining to how they ranked their service in the school library.

The teacher librarians were impressed by what their fellow educators had to say about their service. On the other hand, they took note of the competencies about which their fellow educators voiced their uncertainty.

Their main concern was the lack of exposure to other established and better functioning libraries and associations such as The Library and Information

Science Association of South Africa (LIASA). This, exposure in addition to further training, would ground them in their new responsibilities.

The issue of incentives was highlighted as well. The teacher librarians noted that they had to take on this extra work without any form of additional remuneration. Debatably this could affect one's performance on the job. Another fact that became clear was that the teacher librarians did not volunteer themselves for this job; instead, the schools selected them for the position. It is reasonable to assume that the way a person functions on the job will be affected by his or her interest in it. If a teacher librarian is a person who lacks interest in information work, how will she or he interest fellow educators and learners to use the facility and its resources?

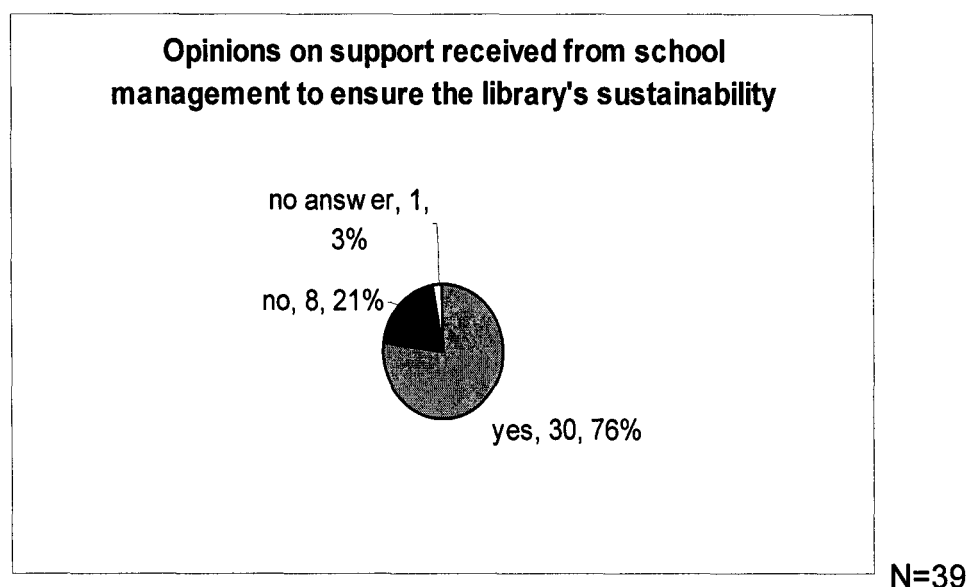
#### **4.7. School library sustainability**

The goal of the pilot project was to develop libraries in the Melani cluster, enable the schools to sustain them and possibly replicate the model in other rural areas in the Eastern Cape. In view of this, data was obtained from the educators, learners and teacher librarians relating to what would make the school libraries to be sustainable.

##### **4.7.1. Educators' response with regard to school libraries' sustainability.**

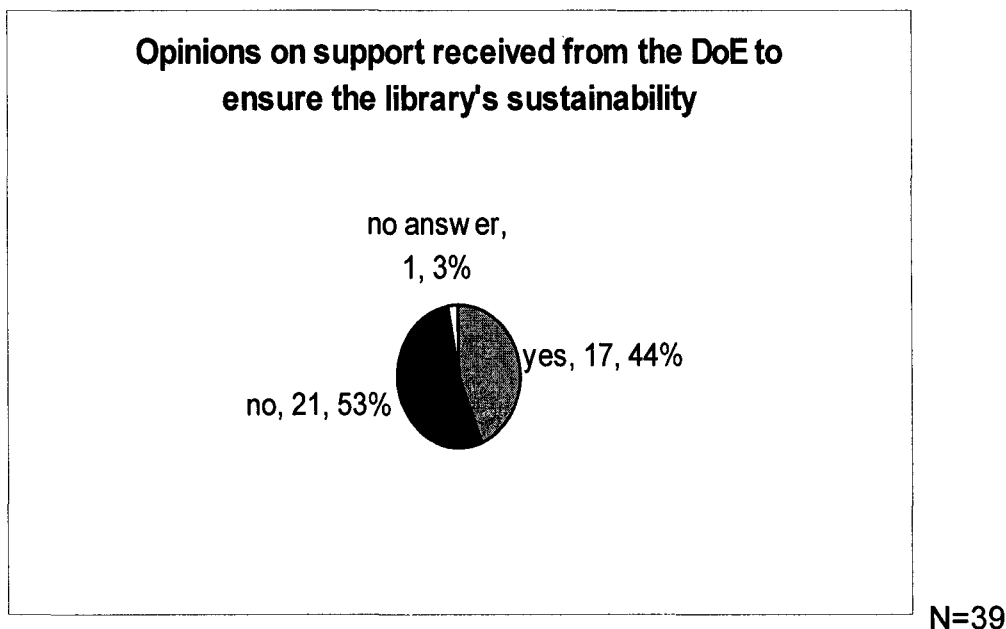
The investigator was of the opinion that the sustainability of the school libraries relies on the support they get from the school management (Principal and School Governing Body) and the DoE. Therefore, the educators were asked whether

they thought that the school library received sufficient support from the above bodies.



**Figure 24**

The majority of the educators (30 or 76%) were of the opinion that school management took their libraries seriously and offered sufficient support. Perhaps the involvement of the principals in teaching programmes made them understand the importance of libraries (especially incorporating resources into the curriculum). Not all educators agreed, seemingly more is required of these principals as indicated in response no. 2 under figure 25. The same cannot be said for the DoE. According to figure 25, many educators (21 or 53%) thought that it was not doing enough to sustain their libraries.



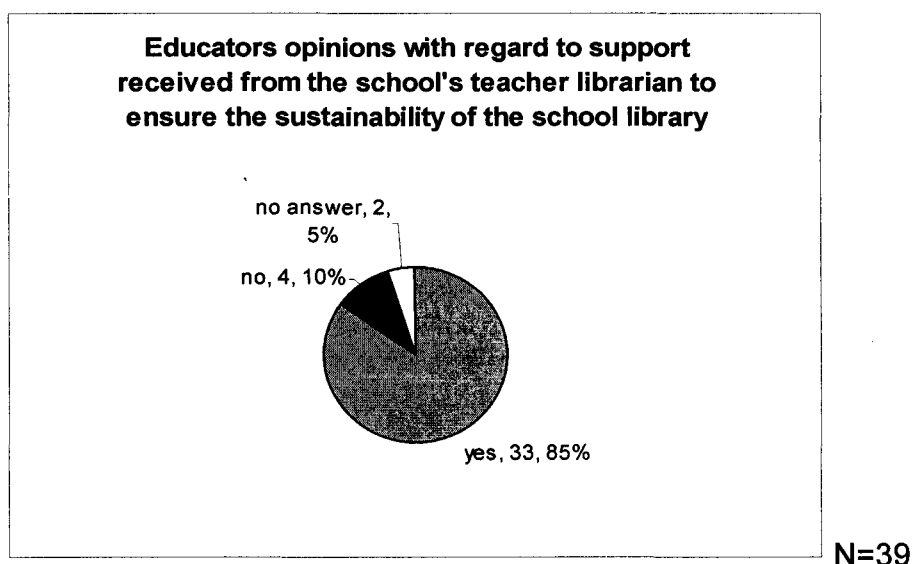
**Figure 25**

The educators were asked to suggest what should be done. Their responses were that:

1. "The DoE should visit schools and assess the libraries. Schools are in need of more resources and equipment such as shelves, chairs and desks; therefore funds are required to purchase these items."
2. "School principals should take more interest in libraries."
3. "Proper library facilities should be constructed instead of relying on converted classrooms."

It is unlikely that school libraries will take centre stage until the completion and adoption of the national school library policy. Thereafter the ECED will have guidelines on how to support and allocate funds for school libraries.

The investigator wanted to ascertain whether educators thought that they received sufficient support from their teacher librarians to enable them and their learners to utilize the library continuously. An overwhelming thirty three (85%) agreed, while four (10%) disagreed. (See figure 26).



**Figure 26**

The educators who were dissatisfied were asked what they would advise their teacher librarian to do to encourage more use. The general response was that the teacher librarian should organize more reading activities and competitions. The teacher librarian should also encourage educators to motivate their learners to read more, especially when there is no teacher in class.

Lastly, the educators were requested to mention what additional facilities or services they thought would encourage them to use the library more. As for services, they indicated that there is a need for more staff, as this would enable the teacher librarian to spend more time in the library. The following were also considered important in strengthening a school library:

1. Educational Toys for Grade R
2. Televisions
3. Radios
4. Overhead Projectors
5. Shelves



6. Computers
7. Electricity (1 school)
8. Photocopiers
9. More reference sources
10. Materials in all languages
11. Materials that support educators interests
12. Newspapers and Magazines
13. Library Building
14. Burglar proof windows and doors.

In the absence of a national school library policy the provision of these items remains a challenge to the establishment and development of school libraries.

#### **4.7.2. Reasons for the importance of school library sustainability according to learners**

School library sustainability is crucial to ensure that all generations that will pass through the schools will benefit from the facility and its resources. For this reason the investigator sought to find out what the learners like most about their library, and what they disliked as well. Some of the comments that came from the learners pertaining to what they liked most were as follows:

1. "The library is a quiet place where I can concentrate."
2. "I love the stories and would like to read more English stories."
3. "We need more Afrikaans books."
4. "We need more time to read story books."
5. "I love the story books, I go to the library every day at break time to get some more to read."

When it came to pointing out what they disliked, they concentrated on faults with regard to the library room such as broken windows, dilapidated desks and chairs, a mud floor in one instance, lack of electricity and lack of shelves. They were probed to compare what school was like before and after the libraries were started. Most of the younger learners could not remember but the older learners

indicated that school was a more interesting place after the establishment of the libraries.

Despite two of the schools having no libraries, it was apparent that they did use the resources that were stored in the principals' offices and classroom cupboards. They indicated that they received guidance on how to use these resources from their class teachers.

The learners from the schools with libraries highlighted that they have noticed that other surrounding schools do not have libraries. They were asked whether they would trade their libraries for anything else and they were firmly against it. Some of the learners noted that their library rooms were small and suggested the expansion of the facilities.

Lastly, the learners were asked to indicate what would make them use the library more. This led to a flood of wishes with some learners asking if the investigator was going to bring these things for them. The investigator informed them that she could not do so but would pass their request to the DoE (District Office) and other donors for action. The following is a list of major suggestions made by the learners:

1. More resources in English and Xhosa to help them with their schoolwork. (8 schools)
2. More story books (11 schools)
3. A bigger library room with enough seating space (9 schools)
4. Televisions; so they can watch programmes such as School T.V., Soul Buddyz, and 'Takalani' Sesame (9 schools, the group in one of the schools claimed that a T.V. would make noise in the library!)
5. The library should be open during weekends and holidays. (5 schools)

6. More shelves (9 schools)
7. Desks and chairs (9 schools)
8. More posters and pictures (11 schools)
9. Computers (11 schools)
10. Photocopiers (11 schools)
11. Electricity (1 school)

Learners in schools that did not have libraries were asked what they would like to have in a library. They indicated more or less the same things as their counterparts in the schools with libraries.

The investigator had the impression that the learners are enthusiastic about their library collections. Accordingly, they could not bear the thought that perhaps one day their libraries would be shut down. There has been no such threat thus far for the nine schools. This was said in comparison to what their fellow learners experienced in surrounding schools without libraries.

#### **4.7.3. Viewpoint of the teacher librarians with regard to the sustainability of school libraries.**

The teacher librarians had the same views as their fellow educators, viz that generally they enjoy the support from the school management but the DoE is found wanting. The discussion gave rise to a concern about whether the DoE has any documentation that could guide schools on the management of school libraries. The lack of such material has made it difficult for the teacher librarians and school management to include school libraries in their year plans and budgets. The investigator is of the opinion that the DoE is aware of the necessity

of school libraries; but that the department has failed thus far to conclude the process of establishing a school library policy.

The discussion tapped into what they thought about the establishment of school libraries in the Eastern Cape. The following responses were noted:

1. The option of being a teacher librarian should not be imposed; instead, interested people should be involved. (These respondents were nominated by their schools to become teacher librarians.)
2. The DoE should produce a document that would guide schools on how to establish and run school libraries. When doing this, stakeholders such as educators, principals, and other relevant bodies should be involved to make the plan workable.
3. They do not recommend the cluster model; instead, each school library should be given the chance to develop independently. In their opinion, the cluster model does not develop schools equally. Some schools may end up having better services and resources than others as the cluster or model library takes priority over the other libraries.
4. Remuneration will improve work ethic and productivity.

#### **4.8. The position of the provincial Department of Education pertaining to school libraries**

The investigator would like to acknowledge the efforts made thus far by the DoE and ECED in outlining a school library policy as part of the South African education system, though the document had not been finalized at the time of the investigation (LIASA, SLYSIG Interest Group Newsletter, 2005/6:1). However, the findings indicate that the DoE and ECED were found wanting when it comes to the establishment and running of school libraries in the country and the province as a whole. As a result, the investigator sought some clarification from Head of ERIS on the views expressed by learners and educators. The interview was conducted telephonically. The ERIS unit is in charge of learner support, materials, and school libraries in the Eastern Cape Province.

The Head of ERIS was informed that the educators and teacher librarians who participated in this study were of the opinion that the DoE and the ECED do not give enough support for school libraries. She agreed that it has been difficult to do so because there is no policy on school libraries in the DoE at the National Office down to District Office levels. This has made it very difficult to plan and allocate funds for the development and sustainability of school libraries. She pointed out that it has also been difficult to assign coordinators in DoE district offices to oversee school libraries; as a result, the responsibility of libraries is given to education specialists in charge of curriculum. These individuals are currently very busy supervising the implementation of the RNCS hence they have little or no time to focus on school libraries.

This portrays a gloomy picture that provides little hope for school libraries; although, the investigator was informed that there has been a lot of lobbying for school libraries in the recent past. Stakeholders from organizations such as LIASA, NGOs, institutions of higher learning, The DoE District and Provincial Offices and others have urged the DoE to finalize the school library policy for implementation. As a result, the final draft was recently completed and sent to the committee of Ministers at national level for their approval. This is part of the final stages, which will be completed when the document is tabled in Parliament. The investigator was anxious to know if there is any definite time when the

process is expected to be complete, but the interviewee was reluctant to suggest any definitive time.

The interviewee outlined the procedure that would take place to finalize the provincial school library policy once the national policy is concluded.

1. The provincial policy will be restructured to fit in with the national school library policy.
2. The provincial document will thereafter be circulated to all stakeholders involved with education in the province. At this stage, suggested inputs and deletions will be invited.
3. The refined document will then be sent to the provincial DoE legal services section for scrutiny. Afterwards the document will be forwarded to the Member of the Executive Council in charge of Education for his or her signature.
4. The document subsequently will be placed in a Government Gazette for circulation amongst all political organizations and interested parties. Thereafter it will be approved as a binding document by the Province's Executive Council.

The information above seems reassuring. However, one wishes that the process could be accelerated. As the country progresses into its twelfth year of democracy, school libraries could be recognized as instruments that will uplift the people educationally.

## **Chapter Five**

### **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter focuses on the conclusion of the study and recommendations.

#### **5.1. Conclusions**

The RNCS is seen as an overall curriculum based on resource based teaching and learning that aims at educating the school going population to become competent individuals in society. For that reason the school library must be recognized as a component of that programme and a vital component if all its potential roles are taken into account. This study confirms what the literature has said about the influence school libraries have on academic achievement.

As outlined in section 2.1, Haycock (2004) explains that school libraries can fulfil the following roles in schools:

“ (a) Resource agent (b) Literacy developing agent (c) Knowledge construction agent (d) Academic achievement agent (e) Independent reading and personal development agent (f) Technology literacy agent (g) Rescue agent and an (h) Individualized learning agent.”

The investigator is of the opinion that the findings in section 4.5 show that the Melani cluster libraries identify with two of the listed roles, firstly as an academic achievement agent and secondly as an independent reading and personal development agent. The findings demonstrate that there has been some change in academic performance in using libraries to do homework and assignments. The educators explained that their learners' ability to speak English had improved as well as their reading skills (refer to section 4.5.1). Such a result in a

space of two years supports the contention that libraries can make a difference. This is consistent with the findings in the literature reviewed (Williams & Wavell, 2001; Scholastica, 2004 and Lance, 2002). The learners indicated their desire for more resources in English instead of resources in their mother tongue Xhosa (see section 4.7.2). Their request for English materials probably suggests they have realized that English is a universal language required for conducting many socio-economic transactions.

The findings reveal that the library resources are indeed being utilized for teaching and learning. In section 4.4.1, the educators indicated that they incorporate the resources in their teaching programmes. When the teacher librarians were probed how they did so in the focus group discussion they were reluctant to explain. This substantiates the findings of Maepa & Mhinga, (2003: 272) in that educators regard resources based teaching and learning as a sensitive issue. Probably the educators felt that they would be scrutinized rather than instrumental by providing information in this regard. The learners pointed out that they used the resources for their schoolwork, homework, and leisure when they read story books (See section 4.3.2).

The results of this study show that there is cooperation amongst teacher librarians and their fellow educators (see section 4.3.1 and figure 20). However, in section 4.5.2 the teacher librarians stated that inconsistency with regard to the implementation of library programmes remained a challenge. This is attributed to



teacher re-deployment and persistent understaffing in most Melani Schools. The resulting teaching overload affects the educators' ability to engage in other activities such as supporting learners to develop a reading habit. Probably out of sheer dedication and love of the learners, most teachers were making efforts to assist learners to develop a culture of reading and use of libraries.

Teacher librarians and teacher librarianship training were acknowledged as important for the management and running of school libraries. This ensures that the library runs smoothly to satisfy needs of the school community. The teacher librarians agreed that the training that was organized by the pilot project (See Appendix 1) had helped them to operate their school libraries. However in section 4.6.1 they highlighted that the availability of a school library policy would ease and validate planning procedures and running the libraries. Remuneration incentives, lighter teaching loads, further training in teacher librarianship and exposure to other established and better running libraries were also identified as means of improving their library service. The educators regarded the efforts of the teacher librarians to be important. Their services were ranked as satisfactory except when it came to knowledge of the RNCS (refer to figure 23). Perhaps this is understandable since the RNCS is still in an early phase of implementation. Perhaps with further training on the RNCS and experience this challenge could be tackled. The teacher librarians were pleased with their fellow educators' views about their services and took note of the uncertainties. Nevertheless they highlighted that they needed further support from the DoE.

Most of the educators acknowledged the support of their school libraries by the school governing bodies and principals. Nevertheless, the same could not be said about the DoE and ECED. Educators felt that the DoE and the ECED should do more for school libraries. The teacher librarians pointed out the importance of a policy document to guide them on how to run their school libraries. The investigator was anxious for the ECED views on the issues pertaining to the finalization of a school library policy. The interview with the Head of ERIS revealed that the policy document on school libraries was in its final stage of completion, (refer to section 4.8) although no definite time could be given.

The study revealed that even in the absence of an official policy on school libraries other avenues exist for the establishment and development of school libraries. Melani Cluster Library Pilot Project is an example of what concerted efforts of Donors, Educators, Government, a Professional Association, and an Institution of Higher Learning can accomplish.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

School libraries should have an integral role in the implementation of the RNCS in South Africa. It would seem that this is currently hindered by the lack of a National School Library Policy. On the other hand, this investigation has revealed that school libraries cannot be sustainable without the necessary support and resources. It was also evident that dedicated and effective teacher librarians are key role players in the establishment and implementation of school library programmes. In view of that, the investigator recommends the following:

1. Recognition of the school library as an integral structure of the school system. Resources must therefore be provided. (See Section 5.1). Primary school provides foundation education for all citizens; hence it is the best stage to start developing information literate citizens. School libraries should enlighten and entertain its users alongside fulfilling their academic function.
2. School library resources must cater for the needs of learners and their educators. (See section 4.4.3) This calls for the establishment of a reliable collection development policy for each school.
3. Need to recognize the teacher librarian as an integral part in the school system. Knowledgeable and dedicated people must manage school libraries therefore the appointment and training of teacher librarians is crucial. The reduction of teacher librarians teaching loads will give them ample time to concentrate on their school libraries. (See section 4.4.3 and 5.1)
4. In view of RNCS, information literacy should be a core module in teacher education curricula. This will enable educators to appreciate the role of libraries in resource based teaching and learning.
5. Need to accelerate the finalization of the National and Provincial Policy Framework for School Libraries. Now it is more urgently needed in view of the requirements of OBE. The document policy should clearly outline how the DoE will fund and sustain school

libraries (refer to section 2.3.1 and 4.6.1). Schools should also be given leeway to determine the growth of their libraries. The involvement of more stakeholders such as parents and NGOs can make a significant contribution towards the development and management of school libraries.

6. Further research on school libraries in South Africa will shed more light on what is needed to establish more libraries in primary schools. Studies on educators' attitudes towards libraries, teaching, and learning philosophies will help to develop suitable programs to train teacher librarians. It will also enable educators to incorporate school libraries more effectively as part of the teaching and learning process. Another area of interest could be 'school libraries and academic achievement in historically disadvantaged communities'.

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## Appendix 1

### Training action plan for the teacher librarianship training programme

ACTIVITY	OUTPUT
Collection Development & Acquisition of books	Participants will understand principles around stock building for school libraries and further on select suitable materials from publishers for the cluster library.
Preparation and arrangement of Library stock a) Collating b) Stamping c) Accessioning	Participants will understand to prepare materials and distribute them e.g. Checking the condition of the books, stamping and assigning accession numbers.
Classification	Participants will be able to define classification. They should be able to distinguish between accession numbers, classification numbers and location numbers. Participants to classify books for cluster library.
Cataloguing	Participants should understand what cataloguing is. Be able to prepare a catalogue card and trace material by using them. Participants to catalogue books for the library.
Cataloguing and Classification	Participants to continue with the classification and cataloguing of the materials for the cluster library.
Effective use of library Integration	Participants will be able to work with the educator team to integrate the school library as an active part of teaching and learning in the classroom.
Improving Library Appearance	Participants will understand the important aspects to be taken into consideration whilst organizing and decorating a library e.g. Effective Posters, Poster making etc.
Library on a shoe -string	Financial constraints should not hinder the development of the library. Hence participants should understand how to improvise.

## Appendix 2

University of Cape Town  
Department of Information and Library Studies

Questionnaires for Educators of the Melani Cluster of Primary Schools

Hello, my name is Nampombe Mnkeni. I am a Masters Student in the Department of Information and Library Studies at the University of Cape Town.

The topic of my research project is "*The effectiveness of teacher librarians in primary schools: the experience of the Melani Schools in the Eastern Cape.*" In this project I will be investigating the impact the libraries and the teacher librarians have had on the learners and fellow educators since the establishment of the school libraries.

I am requesting you to participate in this project by completing this questionnaire. I would be extremely grateful for your help in an exercise I believe will be of real value to the establishment of school libraries in the Eastern Cape. Your participation should take around 10 minutes of your time and would make a major contribution to the outcome of my research project.

The information collected is strictly for research purposes; therefore it will be treated as confidential.

**PLEASE TICK THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE**

**1. Respondent Information**

**1.1. Gender:**

- a) Male [ ]
- b) Female [ ]

**1.2. Age Group:**

- a) 20-29 [ ]
- b) 30-39 [ ]
- c) 40-49 [ ]
- d) 50- [ ]

**1.3. Teaching Experience:**

- a) Less than 10 years [ ]
- b) 10-15 years [ ]
- c) 16-20 years [ ]
- d) More than 20 years [ ]

**2. Library Use**

**2.1. I use the library:**

- a) Daily [ ]
- b) Weekly [ ]
- c) Monthly [ ]
- d) Occasionally [ ]
- e) Rarely [ ]

**2.2. I use the library primarily to: (you may tick more than one)**

- a) Support my teaching [ ]
- b) Find materials for my pupils [ ]
- c) Use reference materials e.g. [ ]  
Dictionaries, Encyclopaedias etc.
- d) Private study [ ]
- e) Support my own reading [ ]
- f) Read newspapers/ magazines [ ]
- g) Other (Please explain) [ ]

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.....

**2.3. I would use the library more if: (you may tick more than one)**

- a) I thought it would support my teaching more effectively [ ]
- b) More help was given [ ]
- c) It was available throughout the day [ ]
- d) I had more time [ ]
- e) I had a specific need to do so [ ]
- f) Other (Please explain)..... [ ]

.....



2.4. Is the school library marketed to educators and learners?

- a) Yes [ ]
- b) No [ ]

If your response was yes please briefly explain who markets the library at your school and how she/he does so. ....

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### 3. Library Materials/Resources

3.1. I incorporate library resources in my teaching programmes e.g. by using the resources in my lesson preparation etc.

- a) Yes [ ]
- b) No [ ]

3.2. The resources in the library are:

- a) Too many [ ]
- b) Sufficient [ ]
- c) Too few [ ]

3.3. The resources in the library are organized and arranged in a systematic manner hence making retrieval of resources easy:

- a) Yes [ ]
- b) No [ ]

3.4. The resources in the library:

- a) Support my teaching extremely well [ ]
- b) Are adequate to support my teaching [ ]
- c) Are not adequate to support my teaching [ ]

Please explain how:

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3.5. I recommend specific resources to pupils:

- a) Frequently (more than once per term) [ ]
- b) Occasionally (at least once per term) [ ]
- c) Rarely [ ]
- d) Never [ ]

3.6. I bring pupils to the library:

- a) Frequently (more than once per term) [ ]
- b) Occasionally (at least once per term) [ ]
- c) Rarely [ ]
- d) Never [ ]

3.7. Do learners in your school have direct access to the library in their free time i.e.

during breaks or after school?

- a) Yes      [   ]
- b) No       [   ]

3.8. If you answered yes, have the learners been taught how to find the resources in the library and how to use them?

- a) Yes                      [   ]
- b) No                        [   ]
- c) I do not know        [   ]

3.9. If you answered no, do you as an educator take the resources out of the library to your learners in class?

- a) Yes      [   ]
- b) No       [   ]

3.10. Do you think that the learners at your school already know how to use the library and its resources?

- a) Yes      [   ]
- b) No       [   ]

3.11. Do you cooperate with the teacher librarian of your school to promote the use of the library resources for teaching and learning at your school?

- a) Yes      [   ]
- b) No       [   ]

Please explain your answer.....  
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#### 4. Academic Performance

4.1. Since the establishment of the school library have you noticed any significant change in your learners' academic performance?

- a) Yes      [   ]
- b) No       [   ]

Please provide a brief explanation supporting your answer.

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4.2. The Revised National Curriculum Statement emphasizes the importance of learners

developing the culture of reading. Do you think learners at your school receive the necessary support from:

- a) Educators Yes [ ] No [ ]  
 b) Teacher Librarian Yes [ ] No [ ]  
 c) Principal Yes [ ] No [ ]

Please explain your answer

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## 5. Library Service

5.1. Would you describe your school's teacher librarian as an individual who...

(Tick appropriate response next to competence)

No.	Competence	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
5.1.1.	is committed to programme excellence.			
5.1.2.	provides appropriate information, resources or instruction to satisfy the needs of learners and educators.			
5.1.3.	knows the curriculum programme mandated by the Dept. of Education.			
5.1.4.	looks for partnerships and alliances e.g. other schools, institutions, potential donors etc.			
5.1.5.	understands learners and their social, emotional and intellectual needs.			
5.1.6.	has effective communication skills.			
5.1.7.	Works well with others (educators).			
5.1.8.	provides leadership.			
5.1.9.	plans, prioritizes and focuses on what is important.			
5.1.10.	is committed to life long learning			
5.1.11.	promotes reading programmes and cultural events.			
5.1.12.	is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change in the South African education system.			

## 6. School Library Sustainability

6.1. Do you think that the school library receives sufficient support from:

- School management (Principal and school governing body)
  - a) Yes [ ]
  - b) No [ ]
- The Department of Education
  - a) Yes [ ]
  - b) No [ ]

If your response was no what would you suggest must be done?

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....

6.2. As an educator do you feel that you get enough support from the school's teacher librarian to encourage you and your learners to use the library's resources continuously?

- a) Yes     [   ]
- b) No      [   ]

If your response was no what would you advise your teacher librarian to do to encourage more use?

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6.3. What additional facilities or services do you think your school library should offer to encourage more use and promote effective teaching and learning?

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*Thank you for taking time to answer these questions.*

## **Appendix 3**

**University of Cape Town  
Department of Information and Library Studies**

### **Group interview questions for primary school learners**

#### **1. Respondent Information**

[Where brackets/spaces are provided the interviewer will fill in the number of respondents according to their respective responses].

**1.1 No. of Boys:      No. of Girls:**

**1.2 Year Group:** 6 [ ] 7 [ ] 8 [ ] 9 [ ] 10 [ ] 11 [ ] 12 [ ]  
13 [ ] 14 and above [ ]

#### **2. Library Use**

- 2.1 How often do you visit the library?
- 2.2 Why do you visit the library?
- 2.3 Have you ever been told/asked/encouraged to use the library?
- 2.4 Who did so?

#### **3. Library Materials**

- 3.1 Which library materials do you like to use?
- 3.2 What do you use library materials for?
- 3.3 Do you sometimes need help getting/choosing library materials?
- 3.4 When you need help who do you ask?

#### **4. School Library Sustainability**

- 4.1 What is the best thing about your school library?
- 4.2 What do you dislike about the school library?
- 4.3 Please tell me about how school was before the library was started.
- 4.4 Please tell me about how school is after the library was started.
- 4.5 What would make you use the library more?

## **Appendix 4**

### **University of Cape Town Department of Information and Library Studies Focus group discussion questions**

**Research Topic:** The effectiveness of teacher librarians in primary schools: the experience of the Melani Cluster of Schools in the Eastern Cape.

#### **Group: Eleven Teacher Librarians from the Melani Cluster of Schools**

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Opening Question</b>      | 1. Tell us your name and the school that you come from. (No. of Teachers, No. of Learners etc)  |
| <b>Introductory Question</b> | 2. You have been invited to take part in this discussion because you are teacher librarians from the Melani Cluster of Schools. Each of you has played a significant role in the establishment of libraries in the cluster's schools. Briefly tell us about your school library. (Ask about school library committee) |
| <b>Transition Question</b>   | 3. The first phase of this investigation involved interviewing ten learners from each of your schools and acquiring the opinions of your fellow educators by means of a questionnaire. Please take a few moments to look over the summary of the findings obtained from this exercise.                                |

#### ***PAUSE FOR TEACHER LIBRARIANS TO REVIEW FINDINGS***

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Key Question</b> | 4. What is your impression of these findings?   |
| <b>Key Question</b> | 5. Did anything surprise you? In your opinion is any part of these findings incorrect?  |
| <b>Key Question</b> | 6. The findings suggest that most of the teacher librarians are in the forefront marketing the school libraries followed by the Americans (SA Partners) and then librarians from the United Kingdom (Ikhwezi Project). Those who do so, what strategies do you use? Those who do not, what prevents you? Do you think more can be done? |
| <b>Key Question</b> | 7. What problems do you face firstly as a school and secondly as a teacher librarian with regard to your school library?  |

**Key Question**

8. What solutions would you recommend?

**Ending Question**

9. The findings imply that school libraries have a positive impact on the academic and social development of learners. For that reason it is recommended that all schools should have libraries. What do you think should be done to achieve this in the Eastern Cape?

## **Appendix 5**

### **University of Cape Town**

#### **Department of information and Library Studies**

#### **Interview questions for the head of the ERIS unit at the provincial DoE.**

1. Who is responsible for school libraries at the DoE District Offices?
2. What is the status of the School Library Policy Proposal at National and Provincial Level?



